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THE  
**RELIGIOUS WORLD**  
DISPLAYED;  
OR  
A VIEW  
OF THE  
FOUR GRAND SYSTEMS OF RELIGION,  
JUDAISM, PAGANISM,  
CHRISTIANITY, AND MOHAMMEDISM;  
AND OF  
THE VARIOUS EXISTING DENOMINATIONS, SECTS, AND  
PARTIES, IN THE CHRISTIAN WORLD.

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED,

A VIEW OF  
**DEISM AND ATHEISM.**

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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BY THE

*Rev. ROBERT ADAM, B. A. Oxford,*

Minister of the Episcopal Congregation, Blackfriar's Wynd, Edinburgh;  
and Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Earl of Kellie.

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Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.

1 THESSAL. 5. v. 21.

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VOL. III.

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PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY MOSES THOMAS,

No. 52, Chesnut Street.

.....

1818.



“ We have, I verily believe, in our country, the best establishment of Christianity, in doctrine and discipline, and the most conducive to every good purpose of society ; but yet it behoves us to look impartially into the different controversies and opinions, and Confessions of Faith.”—Archbishop DRUMMOND'S *Letter on Theol. Study*, subjoined to his *Sermons*, 8vo. 1803.



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*Note.* Notwithstanding the size to which this work has swelled is far beyond what was originally intended, several minor sects and parties are wholly omitted for want of room.

\* \* \* \* \*

# THE KIRK,

OR

## CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

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NAME, RISE, PROGRESS, &c.—The word *Kirk*, signifying Church, is of Saxon original, or may be considered as a contraction of the two Greek words *κυρια εκκος*, the house of God, and is still used in Scotland, where it is chiefly confined to the Establishment, and the Relief Synod.\*

The most eminent Scottish reformer was John Knox, a man of considerable abilities, of no less courage and resolution, a disciple of Calvin, and a warm admirer of the constitution and discipline

\* The word *kirk* is used for a church also in Flanders; of this *Dunkirk* is an instance.—The Latins called the church *Dominicum*, or *Domus Dei*, God's House; which answers to the Greek *κυριακον*, whence the Saxons derived their name *Kyrick* or *Kyrck*, and the Scotch and English *Kyrk*, or *Kirk* and church.—Tertullian called the church *Domus Columbae*.

which he had established at Geneva. Almost from the æra of the Reformation in Scotland, till that of the Revolution, there was a perpetual struggle between the court and the people for the establishment of an Episcopal or a Presbyterian form of Church Government. The former model of ecclesiastical polity, was patronised by the house of Stuart, on account of the support which it gave to the prerogatives of the crown; the latter was the favourite of the majority of the people, not so much doubtless on account of its superior claim to apostolical institution, as because the laity are there mixed with the clergy in church judicatories, and the two orders, which under episcopacy are kept so distinct, incorporated, as it were, into one body. But the history of the Scottish reformed Church, before the accession of Charles II. to the throne, is not very generally known, even at this day, and it is of so extraordinary a nature, that Dr. Pagitt has well observed, “ We read of many reformations, but of such one as is now in Scotland, we never heard of.”\* That John Knox and his brethren were violent reformers, laying it down as a principle, that in new modelling their church they could not recede too far from the church of Rome, is generally known: but it is not much known, that those men were not, in the proper sense of the word, Presbyterians; for the first proposal of dividing the Church of Scotland into presbyteries, as it is now divided, was made in the General Assem-

\* *Christianography*, p. 188.

bly, 1579,\* though the reformation had been supported by the civil power from 1560. In its constitution during those nineteen years, the *Congregation*, as the reformed Church was then styled, seems to have resembled the Lutheran churches in Germany; the kingdom being divided into districts, over which were placed superintendants with episcopal powers; but each superintendant, absurdly enough, amenable to the jurisdiction of the Synod, of which he was appointed permanent moderator. This constitution was so very defective, that it could not well subsist. Accordingly, the old ecclesiastical government, by Archbishops, Bishops, &c. was restored in 1572, when the church put on a more regular appearance of Episcopacy. This, however, did not continue long; for in 1581, the presbytery of Edinburgh was erected, the first in Scotland; but those courts called Presbyteries, were not generally agreed to by the king till 1586, nor ratified by an act of Parliament until 1592, when Presbyterianism became the establishment of Scotland.

This constitution of the church was far from being acceptable to King James. Even before his accession to the throne of England, he had acquired such influence over the Scottish clergy, as to obtain from them an acknowledgment of the *Parliamentary* jurisdiction of bishops, and after that event he prevailed with them, in 1606, to re-

\* Yet Dr. Hill dates the first establishment of Presbyterian Government in 1560. See p. 234. of his *Theological Institutes*.

ceive those who were styled Bishops, as perpetual presidents or moderators in their ecclesiastical synods. It was not however, till 1610, that there was in Scotland a reformed Episcopacy, such as the Church of England has always enjoyed, and such as Cyprian and the other luminaries of the third century would have acknowledged as regular and apostolical. By the General Assembly which was that year held in Glasgow, Episcopacy was solemnly voted to be thenceforward the government of the Church of Scotland; and it is remarkable, that of more than 170 members, of whom that Assembly consisted, only five voted against Episcopacy, and seven who could come to no determination, declaring, *non liquet*.\*

Presbyterianism thus rejected, was again set up on the ruins of Episcopacy by the covenanters in the reign of Charles I., and continued during the interregnum; but the episcopal form was re-established by his son and successor in 1661; and this constitution of the Church remained till the Revolution in 1688, when Presbyterianism was finally established, and in 1690 ratified by act of Parliament.—Thus Scotland and England having been separate kingdoms at the time of the Reformation, a difference of circumstances in the two countries led to different sentiments on the subject of religion, and at last to different religious

\* See *The Fundamental Charter of Presbytery as it hath been lately established in the Kingdom of Scotland*, published in London 1695; and the *British Critic* for Feb. 1805.

See also above, Vol. II. pp. 298, 403, &c.

establishments. And when they were incorporated into one kingdom by the treaty of union, the same regard to the inclinations of the commonalty of Scotland,\* to which Presbytery owed its first establishment in this country, produced a declaration, to which both kingdoms gave their assent, that “Episcopacy shall continue in England, and that the Presbyterian Church Government shall be the only government of Christ’s Church in that part of Great Britain called Scotland.”†

It is also guaranteed by the 5th Article of the Union with Ireland, not only “that the Churches of England and Ireland, as now established, be united into one Protestant Episcopal church, to be called, *The United Church of England and Ireland;*” but also that “in like manner, the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of

\* According to the Presbyterians themselves—“at no one period was Episcopacy established in this country but by the strong hand of power, and by the most violent and unchristian measures;” and they insist that a great majority of the nobility and gentry, as well as of the commonalty, favoured Presbytery at the Revolution. On the other hand, see above, vol. ii. p. 413.

† See the Appendix to Dr. Hill’s *Theol. Institutes*, or the “Act ratifying the Confession of Faith and settling Presbyterian Church Government in Scotland, being the 5th Act in the 2 Session of the first Parliament of William and Mary, 1690, c. 5.”—See also the 6th Act in the 4th Session of the first Parliament of Queen Anne, 1707, ch. 6. entitled *An Act for securing the Protestant Religion and Presbyterian Church Government*.—Such likewise is the style of the coronation oath, as fixed in this act of security, 16 January, 1707.

the Church of Scotland, shall remain and be preserved, as the same are now established by law and by the acts for the union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland.”\*

**DISTINGUISHING TENETS.**—Amidst these rapid revolutions in the government of the Scottish Church, the established formulary of faith seems to have remained unchanged; and the only Confession which appears to have been legally established before the Revolution in 1688, is that which is published in the *History of the Reformation in Scotland*, attributed to John Knox. It was compiled in 1560 by that reformer himself, aided by several of his friends, and was ratified by Parliament in 1567. It consists of twenty-five articles, and was the confession, as well of the Episcopal as of the Presbyterian Church. The Covenanters indeed, during the grand rebellion, adopted the *Westminster Confession*; in the compilation of which, some delegates from their General Assembly had assisted.† And at the

\* Stat. 40, George III. Ch 67

† The Assembly of Divines at Westminster met on the 1st of July 1643, and agreeably to engagements between the Convention of Estates in Scotland, and both houses of Parliament in England, and upon invitation from the Assembly at Westminster, commissioners were sent from the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland to co-operate with them, “in all such things as might conduce to the better extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, Heresy, Schism, Superstition, and Idolatry, and in uniting this whole island in one form of Church Government, one confession of faith, one catechism, and one directory for the worship of God.”



Revolution, this Confession was received as the standard of the national faith, and the same acts of Parliament which settled Presbyterian Church Government in Scotland, ordain · “ That no person be admitted or continued hereafter to be a minister or preacher within this Church, unless that he subscribe the Confession of Faith, declaring the same to be the Confession of his Faith.” By the act of Union in 1707, the same is required of all “ Professors, Principals, Regents, Masters and others bearing office” in any of the four Universities in Scotland.\*

The *Westminster Confession of Faith*, then, and what are called *The Larger and Shorter Catechisms* contain the public and avowed doctrines of this Church; and it is well known that these formularies are Calvinistical, † if not Supra-Lapsarian.

The Scottish commissioners were,

Messrs. Alexander Henderson, Robert Douglas, and George Gillespy, all of Edinburgh;—Samuel Rutherford, of St. Andrew’s, and Robert Baillie, of Glasgow, ministers; together with John Earl of Cassils, John Lord Maitland, afterwards Duke of Lauderdale, and Sir Archibald Johnston, of Wariston, ruling elders. Their commission is dated August 19, 1643.

The W. Confession of Faith was approved and adopted by the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, on 27th August, 1647, Sess. 23, and was ratified by Act of Parliament, 7th February, 1649.

\* The Scottish Universities are those of *Glasgow, St. Andrew’s, Aberdeen, and Edinburgh.*

† But, according to her members, “ not one hair’s breadth more so than the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England.” And, “ the contradictions which

But it is generally believed, that many of the ministers of the establishment here, as well as in England, have departed widely from the national faith;\* at least the Church of Scotland is well known to have long been “divided into two parties, the one differing widely from the other in their ideas of ecclesiastical management. The one have declared themselves abundantly zealous to confirm and even extend the rights of *patronage*; while the other wish either to abridge these rights, or to confine their operation so as to extend the influence and secure the consent of the people in the settlement of ministers. The popular party are considered as more zealous for the doctrines of grace and for the articles of religion in all their strictness, as contained in the national Confession of Faith. The opposing party again, who may be denominated the *unpopular* one, seem willing to allow a greater latitude of opinion, and generally preach in a style that seems less

Mr. Overton has met with from Dr. Kipling, &c. are” (remarks a learned and respectable minister of this Church, who took the trouble of reviewing this article in MS.) “deplorable proofs of the effect of prejudice, and of not studying Theology in the English Universities, in a connected and systematic method.”—Others think very differently on this subject; and where men of learning and eminence on both sides so widely differ, I presume not to give an opinion.

\* Some are of opinion, that the number of those who have departed from the national faith is not very great, and that many of those who support moderate measures in ecclesiastical courts, avow themselves Calvinists, and preach accordingly, though, generally speaking, not in so practical and impressive a manner as those of the popular party.

evangelical, and less fitted to affect the hearts and consciences of the hearers. They designate themselves *moderate men*, and therefore strenuously oppose what they call the *wildness of orthodoxy, the madness of fanaticism, the frenzy of the people.* To the conduct of their opposing *moderate* brethren, the *popular* clergy attribute most of the unhappy religious divisions which have taken place in Scotland; and could they be but persuaded to relinquish their unpopular measures, it is believed that most of the Sectaries would in time be brought back to the communion of the established Church.”\*

In a selection of Sermons in four vols., delivered on particular occasions, and entitled *The Scotch Preacher*, will be found a pleasing specimen of the pulpit compositions of the Scottish clergy, and of the doctrines which are now taught in the Established Kirk.

WORSHIP, RITES, AND CEREMONIES.—In this Church the worship is extremely simple, and but few ceremonies are retained. John Knox, like his master Calvin, seems to have been less an enemy to Liturgies and established forms, than their more modern followers; for, though he laid aside the Book of Common Prayer about the year 1562, he then introduced one of his own composition, which more strongly resembled the Liturgy of the Church of Geneva. There is, however, now no Liturgy or form in use in this Church, and the

\* *Life of Dr. Witherspoon*, prefixed to his works in 8 vol. Edinburgh, 1804, Vol. I. p. 24.

minister's only guide is *The Directory for the Public Worship of God* ;\* nor is it thought necessary to adhere strictly to it : for, as in several other respects, what it enjoins with regard to reading the Holy Scriptures in public worship is, at this day, but seldom practised.†

By the ecclesiastical laws, “the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper should be dispensed in every parish four times in the year ;” but this law is now, I believe, seldom adhered to, unless in most Chapels of Ease. In country parishes it is often administered not above once a year, and in towns generally only twice a year. The people are prepared for that holy ordinance by a fast on some day of the preceding week, generally on Thursday, and by a sermon on the Saturday ; and they meet again on the Monday morning for public thanksgiving.

They have no altars in the kirks, and the communion tables are not *fixed*, but introduced for the occasion, and are sometimes two or more in

\* See the article *Presbyterianism* above, vol. 2. p. 306. This *Directory*, as drawn up by the Westminster Assembly of Divines in 1644, was examined and approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on the 3d, and ratified by Act of Parliament on the 6th February 1645 ; and this act was approved and revived by the 10th act of the General Assembly, 1705.

† “How large a portion shall be read at once is left to the wisdom of the minister ; but it is convenient that ordinarily one chapter of each Testament be read at every meeting ; and sometimes more where the chapters be short, or the coherence of matter requireth it.”—*Chapter of Public Reading of the Holy Scriptures.*

number, and of considerable length. At the first table, the minister immediately upon concluding what they call the Consecration Prayer, usually proceeds to read the words of the institution, and without adding more, to distribute the elements, which he does only to the two Communicants who sit nearest him on each hand.\* It is usual for the elders to administer them to the rest. But before, or during the services of the succeeding tables, addresses at some length are made to the communicants by the minister, or by one of the ministers, (for there are generally two or more present), standing at the head of the communion table.†

See a form of the whole order of celebrating this Sacrament, as practised in this Church, in the 1st Vol. of Logan's *Sermons*.

In the exercise of public worship, this Church has no Creed,—no ten Commandments,—no Lord's Prayer,—no Doxology,—no reading of the Scriptures; nor does she observe any of the festivals of the Church, that are so well calculated to refresh the minds and to awaken the devotion of

\* This posture is used by them in receiving the Lord's Supper, as well as in singing the praises of God.

† A sum of money is allowed the clergy for covering the necessary expenses incurred by them, in dispensing the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It runs in general from 100 merks Scots, or 5*l.* 11*s.* 1½*d.* Sterling to 100 pounds Scots, or 8*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* Sterling. But this allowance being destined for a special purpose, and scarcely adequate to that purpose, cannot be considered as forming any part of the *income* of the Clergy.

Christians.\* Days of public fasting and thanksgiving she does indeed sometimes observe, particularly those commanded by his majesty, together with the fast previous to, and the day of thanksgiving after the celebration of the Holy Communion.

She has no instrumental music,†—no consecra-

\* The sacred festivals which refer to the illustrious events that proclaim the celestial mission of our blessed Saviour, and which derive the respect that is paid to them, not from the suggestions of superstition, but the dictates of true religion, the grateful and well grounded piety of ancient times always held in the highest veneration; and (the Presbyterians in Holland,) as well as Episcopalians of every country, observe them at this day.

It was the custom of the Church of Geneva, in Calvin's time, to shew some regard to both Christmas day and Easter day, by administering the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on those days.

† An attempt having lately been made to use an organ in the worship of God in one of the churches of Glasgow, that has led to a question, whether musical instruments be authorised by the constitution and laws of this church; and in the Presbytery of Glasgow, at their meeting on the 7th October 1807, "after deliberating at great length," a motion to the following purport was made and seconded:—that the Presbytery are of opinion, "that the use of organs in the public worship of God, is contrary to the law of the land, and to the law and constitution of our established church, and therefore prohibit it in all the churches and chapels within their bounds."

Others go yet further, and condemn musical instruments as unauthorised by God, in the worship of the New Testament: and, it seems, one great object of the Westminster Assembly was to destroy *Organs*; for the Scottish Commissioners in that Assembly, in their letter to the General Assembly of the Kirk here, of date 20th May 1644,

tion of churches or of burying grounds,—no funeral service or ceremony,\*—no sign of the cross in baptism,—and no administration of the Holy Communion in private houses, not even to the sick or dying.†

With regard to *Confirmation*, her members reject it, but they do not condemn it. On the contrary, “we endeavour,” says Dr. Hill, “to supply the want of it in a manner which appears to us to answer the same purpose. We account ourselves bound to exercise a continued inspection over the Christian education of those who have been bap-

observe, that they cannot but admire the good hand of God in the great things done already, among which they include “many colleges in Cambridge provided with such ministers as are most zealous of the best reformation, altars removed, the communion in some places given at the table *with sitting*, the *great organ at Paul’s and Peter’s in Westminster taken down*,” &c.

On the other hand, see the *Scourge*, No. 19. Dorrington’s *Discourse on Singing in the worship of God*, Sect. 7. and Bishop Horne’s *Sermon on the Antiquity, Use, and Excellence of Church Music*, in the 5th vol. of his Lordship’s Sermons. See also above, vol. 2. p. 304.

\* Sir P. Ricaut remarks, in the Preface to his *State of the Greek and Armenian Churches*, that the Eastern Christians, taking notice “that the Dutch nation at Smyrna rehearse no prayers, at the burial of the dead, are not only scandalised thereat, but also Jews and Turks take offence at the silence of prayers when the dead are buried; wondering what sort of *heresy*, or *sect*, is sprung up in the world, so different from the religion of all the prophets.”—Prayers and religious ceremonies are practised not only by Christians, Jews and Turks, but even by many Pagans, at the burial of the dead.

† See above, vol. ii. p. 308, 309.

tised, that, as far as our authority and exertions can be of any avail, parents may not neglect to fulfil their vow: and when young persons partake, for the first time, of the Lord's Supper, we are careful, by private conference and public instruction, to impress upon their minds such a sense of the nature of that action, that they may consider themselves as then making that declaration of faith, and entering into those engagements, which would have accompanied their baptism had it been delayed till riper years.\*\*

By the first book of Discipline, which was compiled by Knox and his associates, and ratified by an act of Council in 1560, the apostolical rite of ordination by the imposition of hands was laid aside as superstitious; but it is now restored and practised as formerly in the Kirk of Scotland, where, as in other Presbyterian Churches, ordination is vested in the Presbytery.

The metre of the version of the Psalms used in this church must be allowed to be very inferior; but besides the Psalms of David, a collection of Translations and Paraphrases, in verse, of several passages of sacred Scripture, together with some

\* *Theological Institutes*, p. 316.—This church allows none to present children to baptism but their parents, and for the most part only the *father*, who “does not make any promise for the child: but he promises for himself, that nothing shall be wanting on his part to lead the child, at some future period, to undertake the obligations which are expressed in the baptism of grown persons.” *Ibid.* p. 314.



Hymns, has been introduced into this Church of late years, by permission of the General Assembly.

**DISCIPLINE, AND CHURCH GOVERNMENT.**—The discipline of the Church of Scotland, though now somewhat relaxed, was never so rigorous as that of Geneva, the Church on whose model it was formed.—“In that temperate exercise of discipline which the general practice of the Church of Scotland recognises as congenial to her constitution, care is taken,” says Dr. Hill, “to avoid every appearance of intermeddling officiously with those matters that fall under the cognisance of the civil magistrate; no solicitude is ever discovered to engage in the investigation of secret wickedness; counsel, private admonition, and reproof, are employed in their proper season; and the public censures of the church are reserved for those scandalous sins which bring reproach upon religion, which give offence to the Christian Society, and which cannot be overlooked without the danger of hardening the sinner, of emboldening others to follow his example, and of disturbing and grieving the minds of many worthy Christians.”\*

It was formerly the practice to oblige fornicators to present themselves in the Kirk, for three different Sundays, on a bench, known by the name of the *Stool of Repentance*, when they were publicly rebuked by their minister, in the face of the congregation; but this punishment is now frequently changed into a pecuniary fine, though seldom, I am told, by conscientious clergymen. For this

\* *Theological Institutes*, p. 254, 5.

change, however, there seems to be no law; and the old practice of publicly rebuking fornicators and adulterers, though very much disliked and cried down by the gentry, &c. is still continued, I believe, in a great majority of the parishes of Scotland. In Edinburgh it is entirely discontinued, because believed to be impracticable; but in Glasgow, Paisley, Stirling, and other towns, the old discipline is still maintained, and those who do not choose to submit to it are excommunicated, or are deprived of what are called Christian privileges.—By the discipline of the church, a parent who is under public scandal is disqualified from presenting his child for baptism, till such time as his character is cleared up, or he has satisfied the Kirk; but as it sometimes happens that this does not soon take place, and in the mean time the child is refused the benefit of baptism, this practice is disapproved of by many, as having the appearance of punishing the children for the iniquity of the parents.

With regard to Church Government:—of the societies at present formed upon the Presbyterian model, it may safely be affirmed, that the Church of Scotland is by much the most respectable; a short view of her constitution may not therefore be unacceptable to the reader, and hers may be considered as the fairest specimen, now existing, of Presbyterian church government in general.\*

\* Mr. Whitfield is said to have considered the national Church of Scotland to be “the best constituted church upon earth;” an expression certainly not the most complimentary to the Church from which he himself received his orders.

In this Church, every regulation of public worship, every act of discipline, and every ecclesiastical censure, which in Episcopal Churches flows from the authority of a diocesan bishop, or from a convocation of the clergy, is the joint work of a certain number of ministers and laymen acting together with equal authority, and deciding every question by a plurality of voices.

The laymen, who thus form an essential part of the ecclesiastical courts of Scotland, are called *Elders*, and *Ruling Elders*; but, though they have the same name, it does not appear that they hold the same office with the elders mentioned by St. Paul in 1 Tim. v. &c.; for these last “laboured in the word and doctrine.”

The number of elders is proportioned to the extent and population of the parish; and few parishes, except where the unpopularity of the minister has induced most of the people to secede, have fewer than two or three.

In Edinburgh, every parish has 12 elders. The Canongate parish has betwixt 20 and 30, and the West Kirk, or St. Cuthbert’s, which is the most populous parish in Scotland, (containing within its bounds from 30 to 35,000 souls) has above 50.

These elders are grave and sober persons, chosen from among the heads of families, of known orthodoxy and steady adherence to the worship, discipline, and government of the Kirk. Being so-

lemnly engaged to use their utmost endeavours for the suppression of vice, and the cherishing of piety and virtue, and to exercise discipline faithfully and diligently, the minister, in the presence of the congregation, sets them apart to their office by solemn prayer, and concludes the ceremony, which is called *ordination*, with exhorting both elders and people to their respective duties.

This office, in many respects, resembles that of the Church-wardens in the Church of England, but the lay elders seem to possess more spiritual jurisdiction than the Church-wardens in their respective parishes.\*

The *Kirk Session*, which is the lowest ecclesiastical judicatory, or court, consists of the minister and those elders of the congregation. The minister is, *ex officio*, moderator, but has no negative voice over the decision of the session ; nor indeed has he a right to vote at all, unless when the voices of the elders are equal and opposite. He may, indeed, enter his protest against their sentence, if he think it improper, and appeal to the judgment of the presbytery ; but this privilege belongs equally to every elder, as well as to every person who may believe himself aggrieved by the proceedings of the session.

The next judicatory is the *Presbytery*, which consists of all the pastors, within a certain district, and one ruling elder from each parish, commissioned by his brethren to represent, in con-

\* See the Article *Presbyterianism*, above, Vol. II.

junction with the minister, the session of that parish.—The Presbytery treats of such matters as concern the particular churches within its bounds, as the examination, admission, ordination, and censuring of ministers; the licensing of probationers,\* rebuking of gross or contumacious sinners, the directing the sentence of excommunication, the deciding upon references and appeals from kirk sessions, resolving cases of conscience, explaining difficulties in doctrine or discipline, and censuring, according to the word of God, any heresy or erroneous doctrine, which hath either been publicly or privately maintained within the bounds of its jurisdiction.—But that part of the constitution of this church which gives an equal vote, in questions of heresy, to an illiterate mechanic and his learned pastor, has not been universally approved, but has been considered by some as having been the source of much trouble to many a pious clergyman, who, from the laudable desire of explaining the scriptures, and declaring to his flock all the counsel of God, has employed a variety of expressions, of the same import, to illustrate those articles of faith, which may be obscurely expressed in the established standards. The fact however is, that, in Presbyteries, the only prerogatives which the pas-

\* In this Church no one is ordained by imposition of hands, till he has a presentation to a parish, or cure of souls, so that probationers are those who have merely a license to preach; and it is remarkable that such young men (unless appointed *helpers* and successors to any minister) are allowed no pecuniary acknowledgment for their occasional trouble in that way.

They have not the same authority with deacons in the Church of England, for they can neither baptise nor marry.

tors have over the ruling elders, are the power of ordination by imposition of hands, which is lodged in this ecclesiastical court, and the privilege of having the moderator chosen from their body.

The number of Presbyteries in Scotland is 78; and those of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, and two or three more, meet every month; but in country districts, they seldom meet above four or five times a-year, unless when some business occurs which requires them to meet oftener.

From the judgment of the Presbytery there lies an appeal to the *Provincial Synod*, which ordinarily meets twice in the year, and exercises over the Presbyteries within the province, a jurisdiction similar to that which is vested in each Presbytery over the several kirk sessions within its bounds. Of these Synods there are in the Church of Scotland *fifteen*, which are composed of the members of the several Presbyteries within the respective provinces which give names to the Synods.\*

The highest ecclesiastical court is *The General Assembly*, which consists of a certain number of ministers and ruling elders, delegated from each Presbytery, and of commissioners from the royal boroughs. By act 5th of the Assembly, 1694, "A Presbytery in which there are fewer than 12 parishes, sends to the General Assembly two mi-

\* The Confession of Faith admits that the civil magistrate may call Synods, be present at them, and provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God.—*Dr. Hill's Theol. Instit.* p. 152.

nisters and one ruling elder;—if it contain between 12 and 18 ministers, it sends three of these, and one ruling elder;—if it contain between 18 and 24 ministers, it sends four ministers, and two ruling elders;—and of 24 ministers, when it contains so many, it sends five, with two ruling elders. Every royal borough sends one ruling elder, (and Edinburgh two) whose election must be attested by the kirk sessions of their respective boroughs; and every University sends one commissioner from its own body.

According to this proportion of representation, the General Assembly, in the present state of the church, consists of the following members, viz.

- 200 Ministers representing Presbyteries.
- 89 Elders representing Presbyteries.
- 67 Elders representing royal boroughs.
- 5 Ministers or elders representing Universities.\*

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The commissioners are chosen annually, about six weeks before the meeting of the Assembly, which always takes place in May;† and the ruling elders are seldom the lay elders of the different parishes, but often gentlemen of the law in Edinburgh, and men of eminence in the kingdom, for rank and talents. Yet some of them, it is feared,

\* Each of the two Colleges in the university of *Aberdeen* sends one Commissioner.

† If a minister fails in his attendance at the respective meetings of the Presbytery and of the Synod, or when elected in his turn to the General Assembly, he is liable to censure; and he attends all these courts at his own charges.

are not so deeply impressed with a sense of religion, as to be interested in the proceedings of an ecclesiastical court, where temporalities are not concerned ; and much less to be duly qualified for deliberating and deciding on religious subjects.

This Assembly is honoured with a representative of the sovereign, in the person of the *Lord High Commissioner*, who is always a nobleman, and presides, and has a salary of 1500*l.* per annum : but he has no voice in their deliberations.

The order of their proceedings is regular, and in general much decorum is observed ; but sometimes opposition runs high between the two parties, who often take this opportunity of trying their strength, and a confusion arises from the number of members, the collision of ministers and laymen, &c., which the *Moderator*, who is annually chosen from among the former to be, as it were, the speaker of the house, has not sufficient authority to prevent.

The Assembly continues to sit for ten days, at the end of which time, it is dissolved, first by the Moderator, who appoints another Assembly to be held upon a certain day of the month of May, in the following year ; and then by the Lord High Commissioner, who, in his Majesty's name, appoints another Assembly to be held upon the day which had been mentioned by the Moderator.\*

\* In this Church, the clergy individually are styled *Reverend* ; a Synod is *Very Reverend* ; and the General Assembly is *Venerable*.



Appeals are brought from all the other ecclesiastical courts in Scotland, to the General Assembly; and in questions purely religious, no appeal lies from its determinations.—To the laws already made, no new one can be added, till it has been proposed in one General Assembly, and by them transmitted to every Presbytery for their consent. If this, or at least the consent of the majority, is obtained, the Assembly next year may pass it into an act, which henceforth must be regarded as a constitutional law of the Kirk.

In the subordination of these assemblies and courts of review, parochial, presbyterial, provincial, and national, the less unto the greater, consists the external order, strength, and stedfastness of the Church of Scotland.

See Mr. Bonar's sermon, entitled, "*The Nature and Tendency of the Ecclesiastical Constitution in Scotland*," in the 1st vol. of the *Scotch Preacher*. "By our constitution," says Mr. B., (p. 23,) "a power is acknowledged, but a power limited to its proper object. A subordination takes place, but the higher you ascend, the determination lies in the greater number; so that if the censure, when inflicted, falls with additional weight, yet hereby the greater security is given that it shall not be inflicted unjustly."

See *A Letter from a Parochial Bishop to a Prelatical Gentleman*, with an *Apology for the Church of Scotland*, both witten by Mr. Willison, sometime minister in Dundee, and both evincing con-

siderable learning and great ingenuity. See also the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Art. *Presbyterians*, and Dr. Hill's *Theological Institutes*, in which the constitution of this Church is ably treated, and at full length.—“We feel no disposition,” says the Doctor, (p. 186,) “to take the Solemn League and Covenant; yet, at the same time, we stand firm in the opinion which every minister of the Church of Scotland declares at his ordination, that the Presbyterian government and discipline of this Church are not only lawful, but founded in the word of God, and conformable to the model exhibited in the primitive times of Christianity.

BOUNDS, NUMBERS, DUTIES, AND INCOME OF THE CLERGY, EMINENT MEN, &c.—The connexion of what was called the *Scots Kirk at Campvere*, in Holland, with the establishment in this country, has lately been dissolved by the Batavian Republic; so that this Church is now confined to Scotland and the islands of Scotland, and it contains within its bounds nearly 900 parishes.

The number of ministers belonging to it who enjoy benefices, and possess ecclesiastical authority, is 936. Of this number 77 are placed in collegiate charges, mostly in the proportion of two ministers for each of these charges; and the remaining 859 ministers are settled in single charges, each of them having the superintendence of a whole parish. In very populous parishes, Chapels of Ease are erected with consent of the Kirk, and are supported by voluntary subscriptions; but the ministers who officiate in them are not included

in this number, as they are not members of any ecclesiastical courts.

“ The duties of the Scotch clergy are numerous and laborious. They officiate regularly in the public *worship of God*; and, in general, they must go through this duty twice every Sunday, (exclusive of other occasional appearances) delivering every Sunday a *lecture* and a *sermon*, with *prayers*. It is also expected, throughout Scotland, that the prayers and discourses shall be of the minister’s own composition; and the prayers, in all cases, and the discourses in most instances, are delivered without the use of papers.”—“ They are expected to perform the alternate duties of *examining* their people from the Scriptures, and Catechisms of the Church, and of visiting them from house to house, with prayers and exhortations. This is done commonly once in the year, being omitted only in those cases wherein the ministers deem it impracticable, or not acceptable, or at least not necessary.”\*—“ The charge of the poor devolves, in a very particular manner, on the clergy; and in them also is vested the superintendence of all schools within their bounds.”†

\* How this practice can at any time, or in any place, become “ not necessary,” I know not; and if necessary, whether the cases wherein the ministers deem it “ impracticable,” or those in which they consider it as “ not acceptable,” occur more frequently, I know not; but that the cases wherein it is wholly disregarded or omitted, are becoming more frequent, year after year, every one seems to know; and there are still some who profess to regret it.

† *Statement of the Numbers, the Duties, &c., of the Cler-*

The provision which has been made by the law of Scotland, for the support of the established clergy, consists in a *Stipend*, payable in victual, or money, or partly in each—a small *glebe* of land—and in a *manse* (parsonage house) and *office-houses*.

The legislature intended the highest stipend to exceed the lowest, only as two to one; but the present state of the stipends paid to the clergy of this Church, is said to exhibit great inequalities. In some parishes, where there are plenty of *teinds*, or tythes of land, the stipends are much more liberal than in others where the valued teinds are scanty. In cities and towns, the stipends are generally paid in money; in “landward,” (*i. e.* country) parishes, they are, for the most part, liquidated in money and victual. When the teinds are exhausted and surrendered, the stipend is exactly the whole of the valued teinds; when not exhausted, augmentations are granted from time to time by the Court of Session, which is the court of teinds.

“The clergy in Edinburgh have their stipends paid in money, and receive 260*l.* each, liable to

*gy of Scotland, drawn up in 1807, by the Rev. William Singers, minister of Kirkpatrick-Juxta, Chap. I.*

“The poor are supported,” (remarks this author,) “without regular assessments, or poor’s rates, in more than 600 of the parishes in Scotland; and it cannot, and certainly will not,” adds he, “be denied that landholders are much indebted for this exemption, to the zeal, attention, impartial conduct, and even to the personal example and liberality of the clergy,” p. 7.

a deduction of 10 *per cent.* for tax on income.\* In landward parishes, the stipends, at an average, may be stated at six chalders of victual, worth 16*l.* per chalder, *communibus annis*, and 50*l.* in money : in all, 146*l.* Sterling. Some of the clergy enjoy a more liberal provision, rising to about 200*l.* a-year, or thereby ; but others are still far below the above stated average, not a few of them being under 60*l.*, and many below 100*l.* a-year of stipend.† The average is, therefore, considered as hardly rising to 150*l.* a-year at the present time.”‡

The *Glebe* consists legally of at least *four* acres of arable land, and, in fact, generally exceeds that measure. Most of the ministers of country parishes enjoy glebes, but those of royal burghs, in general, as well as those of cities and towns, have no glebes. Besides the glebe, the minister of a landward parish is entitled to as much of *grass-lands* as may support a horse and two cows ; yet, “ perhaps, one half of the clergy have no grass, nor any allowance for it.”§

The whole church establishment, “ as a burden on land, may be stated in one view, as follows, viz. —a glebe, of perhaps about six or seven acres, out

\* “Lately augmented to 300*l.* free of taxes.”

† Some are even below 40*l.* per annum.—*Religious Monitor* for April 1808, p. 181.

‡ Mr. Singers’s *Statement*, p. 18.

§ The equivalent, or allowance for grass, having been fixed as far back as 1663, and being only 1*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* Sterling, is not worth a plea.

of nearly 21,000, and the grass, where it is allowed: a stipend of about 9d. in the pound of the land rents; and buildings and communion charges, amounting to 4*d.* or 5*d.* more in the pound of these land rents. All these, put together, constitute the burdens of the Scottish ecclesiastical establishment, in so far as proprietors of land are affected by them.\*\*

The ministers of this Church have long maintained a very respectable character for piety, learning, liberality of sentiment, and regularity of conduct; and those of the present day cannot well be said to yield in these respects to any of their predecessors.

Two of their number (Mess. Ewing and Innes) have indeed forsaken her of late, and gone over to the *Haldanites*, or *New Independents*; nor is this much to be wondered at, considering that the late Dr. Campbell taught from the Theological Chair at Aberdeen,† that the scheme of church government instituted by Christ and his apostles, was neither the Episcopal nor the Presbyterian, but the *Independent*, or *Congregational*, and that all ecclesiastical authority originates from the people. The consequence has been, that the members of this Church have now to contend, not so much with their old and able opponents, the Episcopalians, as with the friends of Independency, against whom their champion seems to be *Mr. Brown*, Minister at Gartmore, who, in a work lately published, has

\* Mr. Singers's *Statement*, p. 29. The communion charges include the *Element Money* noticed above, p. 15.

† *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. I. Lec. 3d, &c.

undertaken to vindicate “the Presbyterian Form of Church Government, as professed in the Standards of the Church of Scotland.”

Among her more distinguished members, this Church ranks the names of Robertson, Henry, Leechman, Blacklock, Gerard, M'Knight, Blair, and Campbell. But surely the last of these, however able a scholar, and however eminent and respectable in other respects, could not be much her friend, when he taught her sons that her constitution was at variance with the institution of Christ and the practice of the apostles. That the Doctor was no friend to Episcopacy, his Posthumous Lectures sufficiently declare; but he has found a very able opponent on these subjects, in the reviewer of them, in the 8th and 9th vols. of the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, to which the reader is referred.

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.—That Presbyterianism is not necessarily inimical to monarchy, as was long suspected, may now be taken for granted, from the experience of Scotland for a century back, where the members of the establishment have been all along among the most loyal of his majesty's subjects; and, by the laws of the state, every minister is required, at his admission, to take the oath of allegiance, in testimony of his attachment to the civil government.

The members of this Church, when in England, are exposed to the same laws which affect other dissenters in that country; but, “though the question has never been judicially decided, there is not

a doubt, that a certificate from the Presbytery within which a Scotsman has resided for a certain time, that he is, *bona fide*, a member of the Established Church of Scotland, would supersede the operation of the *Test and Corporation Acts*, on his receiving a military commission in England.”\*

*The Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge*, which is connected with the Establishment, has been highly useful in promoting religion, morality, literature, and industry, among the lower order of the natives in the Highlands and Islands, many of whom reside at a very great distance from any kirk or parish school.

That Society derived its origin from the benevolence and public spirit of a few private gentlemen, who, early in the last century, formed themselves into a society for the reformation of manners. The General Assembly encouraged their plan, by setting subscriptions on foot, and recommending collections in the kirks and elsewhere, for its support; and in 1709 Queen Anne granted a charter for erecting the subscribers into a corporate body, by the above name. In that charter, the objects of the Society are stated to be—“For raising a voluntary contribution towards the farther promoting of Christian knowledge, and the increase of piety and virtue within Scotland, especially in the Highlands, Islands, and remote corners thereof,” &c. And for these purposes, the patent empowers them to receive subscriptions, donations, money, lands, &c.

\* *British Critic* for August 1807, p. 202.



In 1738, their stock amounted to 29,000*l.*, and they then augmented their schools to 112. The same year they also began to establish schools of industry, which were soon increased to 100.

In 1801, they employed 300 teachers—13 missionaries in remote districts, and 6 students of divinity, who speak the Gaelic language, (which is still spoken in most parts of the Highlands and Islands) and furnish the schools with Bibles, New Testaments, Catechisms, and other elementary books of religion and morals, in that language.

The number of disciples of both sexes, in 1801, was 15,557, who were trained up in the knowledge of religion and good morals, writing, arithmetic, and various useful arts, and in habits of industry. The schoolmasters teach the old, as well as the young, from house to house, on week days, when not employed in the schools; and on Sundays they read the Scriptures, and other pious books, to the inhabitants of the district assembled, sometimes in the open air;—catechise the children in the presence of their parents and friends, and preside among them in the duties of prayer and praise.\*

Of the various sects and parties that have separated from the *Church of England*, the most noted are:

\* See Dr. Kemp's Account of this Society, in his *Anniversary Sermon*, preached in London, 17th May, 1801; or Dr. Ryan's *History of the Effects of Religion on Mankind*, edit. 1806, p. 279, &c.

*The Protestant Dissenters*, so called, comprehending the three following denominations, viz.

*The English Presbyterians,*  
 ————— *Independents,*  
 ————— *Baptists,* and  
*The Methodists.\**

Of those that have separated from the *Established Kirk* of Scotland, the chief are:—

*The Cameronians, or Old Dissenters,*  
*The Seceders,*  
*The Members of the Relief Kirk,*  
*The Scottish Baptists,*  
*The Glassites, or Sandemanians,*  
*The Bereans,* and  
*The Scottish, or New Independents.*

Of all these, in their order.

\* The *Quakers* form another numerous and distinguished body of Dissenters, who may be said to have broken off from the Church of England; and, viewed in that light, they doubtless have a claim to be ranked here, and before the Methodists. But they are a society so very distinct from all others, who dissent with them from the Established Church, and they have a system of policy so peculiar to themselves, that, when we speak of Dissenters in general, we seldom mean to comprehend the *Quakers*, but usually name them by themselves.

In compliance with this custom, the account of them will be reserved to that part of this work which treats of *Miscellaneous Sects and Denominations*.

THE  
PROTESTANT DISSENTERS  
IN  
ENGLAND.

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NAMES.—The word *Dissenter* is a very comprehensive negative term; and Dissenters in England are those religionists, of whatever denomination, with all their subdivisions, who dissent or separate from the worship and communion of the Established Church. They first broke off from the Church about the year 1565, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when, from their refusal to subscribe to the Articles, &c., and their professing and proposing extraordinary purity in religious worship and conduct, they were reproached with the name of *Puritans*. There were, indeed, men of this sort in England in the days of Edward VI., but that name was not given them before the sixth of Elizabeth.\*

\* Fuller's *Church History*, cent. 16, p. 76. Cambden, in his *Life of Elizabeth*, says, they shewed themselves openly in the 10th year of her reign. P. 107. 3d edit. fol.

By the *Act of Uniformity* which took place on *Bartholomew's Day*, 1662, in the reign of Charles II., the Dissenters were greatly increased; for 2000 ministers thought themselves in conscience obliged to quit the Established Church, refusing to *conform* to certain conditions, whence they were called *Non-Conformists*.\* During the last century, their decendants have usually been called *Protestant Dissenters*, a moderate appellation, sanctioned by act of Parliament, and originally given at the Revolution, when they first received a legal security, by having the *Act of Toleration* extended to them. This act includes all, of every denomination, excepting those who deny the divinity of Christ; but the name of *Protestant Dissenters* is now generally confined, or rather perhaps was at first given, to the three denominations of, *Presbyterians*, *Independents*, and *Baptists*.

RISE, PROGRESS, &c.—It would exceed our limits to detail here at full length the origin and progress of the Dissenters. A full account of every thing relating to them, is given in Dr. Toulmin's (a Dissenter of Birmingham) edition of *Neale's History of the Puritans*, in which the editor, in his notes, attempts to obviate the objections which have been made to it by Grey, Maddox, Warburton, and others.

\* See above, Vol. II. p. 297. An Account of the Lives and Literature of the *Bartholomew Divines* is given in Palmer's *Non-Conformists' Memorial*; and, for Dr. Taylor of Norwich's account of them, see Mr. Evans's *Sketch*, under the article *Dissenters*.

This work, though by no means distinguished for impartiality, is still the great oracle and support of the Dissenters; and from it we are led to conclude, that their sufferings at different times have only been exceeded by their religious zeal. The historian traces, step by step, the differences which originally occasioned the separation, and an affecting narrative is given of the sufferings which they underwent in what they conceived to be the cause of religious liberty.—Another, and more brief History of the Puritans, was published in 1772, by the Rev. J. Cornish, of which an enlarged edition has lately been given to the public by the author. Dr. Calamy's *Abridgment of Baxter's Life*, is likewise an able publication on the subject; and in Mr. Orton's *Memoirs of Dr. Doddridge*, or in Dr. Kippis's *Life* of him in the *Biog. Brit.*, or prefixed to the 7th edition of his *Family Expositor*, may be seen much information relative to the *Protestant Dissenters* during the period in which Dr. Doddridge lived.

Ever since the first separation from the church under *Cartwright*, long and various have been the disputes that have been carried on between Churchmen and Dissenters, and perhaps not without some degree of warmth on both sides.\* The Puritans first objected to the order of bishops,—the Liturgy,—the clerical dress,—the sign of the Cross in

\* For some account of Cartwright, who was expelled his college, and deprived of the Margaret Professorship of Divinity at Cambridge, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, see the Postscript to Mr. Jones's *Essay on the Church*.

baptism, &c.; and the general principles on which their descendants declare that they have dissented from the Church of England, are no other than those on which she separated from the Church of Rome. Mr. Evans has reduced these principles to three:—First, “The right of private judgment;” Second, “Liberty of conscience;” and, lastly, “The perfection of Scripture as a Christian’s *only* rule of faith and practice.”

The grounds upon which their dissent is founded, are fully stated in Pierce’s *Vindication of the Dissenters*,—Towgood’s *Letters to White*,—and Palmer’s *Protestant Dissenter’s Catechism*; and they may be found as fully answered in Dr. Bennett’s *Abridgment of the London Cases*.

By the *Test Act*, which was passed in the reign of Charles II., and is still in force, all are excluded from places of trust and profit under Government, except those who take the oaths, and make the declaration against Transubstantiation, and receive the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper according to the usage of the Established Church, within six months after their appointment.—This last qualification some think cannot be consistently complied with by any conscientious Dissenter; and hence loud complaints have been made respecting this exclusion; since, “as members of the civil community, they conceive they are entitled to all the common privileges of that community.” This act was indeed originally levelled against the Roman Catholics, of whom several

had been promoted by the Court; but it was so expressed as also to exclude the Protestant Dissenters, and these last have made several unsuccessful applications for its repeal. In 1787, the question was warmly agitated in the House of Commons, when, on each side, numerous publications issued from the press. See, in particular, a Tract by an eminent divine on the side of the Church, entitled, “*Observations on the Case of the Protestant Dissenters, with reference to the Corporation and Test Acts.*”\*

The chief argument urged for the continuance of the Test Act is “the safety of the Established Church:” the principal arguments alleged for its repeal are, that it is “a prostitution of the Lord’s Supper,” and that “to withhold civil rights on account of religious opinions, is a species of persecution.”

The rights of Toleration (a term which might not have been used, if in fact, it had not been

\* The *Corporation Act* prevents all persons from being legally elected into any office relating to the government of any city or corporation, unless, within a twelvemonth before, they have received the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper according to the rites of the Church of England; and it enjoins them to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, when they take the oath of office, otherwise their election is void.

See Bishop Sherlock’s *History of the Test Act*, 8vo. 1790; and also his *Vindication of the Corporation and Test Acts*, 8vo. 1736.—See a list of most of the tracts both for and against the repeal, in Dr. Kippis’s edition of Dr. Dodridge’s *Lect.* vol. ii. 397, 398, Note.

preceded by prohibition of religious acts interfering with the universality of the establishment) were not allowed till the Revolution, when the *Act of Toleration* passed, by which it is enacted, That the statutes of Queen Elizabeth, and King James I., concerning the discipline of the Church, should not extend to *Protestant Dissenters*; or, that they should be exempted from suffering the penalties which the law inflicted, and permitted (on certain conditions, to which they themselves in general consented) to worship God according to their own consciences.—The conditions, by which the act was limited, are, that all dissenting ministers are required “not only to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and to make the declaration against Popery, but also to subscribe the Doctrinal Articles of the Church of England.”

Besides this, they are not to hold their meetings till their place of worship is certified to the Bishop of the diocese, or to the Justices of the Quarter Sessions, and registered; also, they are not to keep the doors of their meeting-houses locked, during the time of worship. And to secure to them the free exercise of their religion, whoever disturbs or molests them, in the performance of divine worship, on conviction at the Sessions, is to forfeit 20*l.*, by the statute 1st of William and Mary.\*

\* Yet, as Bishop Burnet has well observed, “The toleration that the law gives them, does not alter the nature of things, nor make an unjust separation to be one whit the lawfuller than it was when they were under a severer yoke.



But this act provided no relief to dissenting tutors and schoolmasters; for, before any person could be legally qualified to keep a school, or instruct youth, a license from the archbishop, bishop, or ordinary, was still necessary together with a declaration of conformity to the Church of England. The matter of subscription also was afterwards considered as a grievance; for, though at the time when the act was made, the doctrines thus enjoined to be assented to, were equally the belief of the Established Church and the Dissenters, this has not been supposed, more lately, to be the case.

Application was therefore made to parliament by the Dissenters, for the redress of these grievances, in 1772, that being thought a seasonable opportunity, in consequence of the favourable sentiments expressed in respect to them in the late debates on the petition presented to parliament the same year, by "certain of the clergy of the Church of England, and of certain of the two professions of civil law and physic, and others," praying to be relieved from the subscription to the thirty-nine Articles of Religion. But the application of the Dissenters, (though renewed next session) as well as the petition of the Church-men, was without effect. However, without any further application on their part, an act of parliament passed in 1779, "whereby the

The law only gives a civil impunity, and does not punish; but the cause of the separation is the same that it was, and is neither better nor worse, whether the separation is punished or not."—*Address to the Clergy of the Diocese of Sarum*, prefixed to his Lordship's *Four Discourses*.

benefits of the Toleration Act were granted to Protestant Dissenting Ministers and schoolmasters, upon condition of their taking the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, making the declaration against Popery, and declaring their belief of the Holy Scriptures as containing a Divine Revelation.”

Thus do matters stand at present in respect to the Protestant Dissenters; but though that name was, I believe, originally confined to the three denominations already specified, they are by no means the only sects that have broken off from the Church, nor are they the *only* Protestant Dissenters now in England. During the Interregnum alone, there sprang up a multitude (according to some nearly 60) of different religious sect and parties, contradicting, reviling, and persecuting each other: but fortunately most of these have now sunk into oblivion.

The increase or decrease of Dissenters in any country depends, in a great measure, on the industry or indolence of the Established Clergy. In proof of this, it has been observed, that the first settlers in Virginia were chiefly Episcopalians; but, through the carelessness of the clergy, two-thirds of the people had become Dissenters at the commencement of the late American war.

During the two last reigns, the style of preaching in many pulpits seems to have been alike dry and unedifying; and both the subjects discussed, and the manner of discussing them, to have been such,

that the Christian divine could scarcely be distinguished from the Heathen moralist. Hence the dissenting interest then flourished, because the greater part of its teachers adhered to the doctrinal principles of the Reformation; and every man who has juster sentiments of the importance of religious worship than of the nature and constitution of the Christian Church, will be apt to go where he can best be edified. But, though a great proportion of the Established Clergy are at this day zealous and faithful to their duty, it is a lamentable and undoubted fact, that the number of Dissenters is still increasing, and is certainly much higher than when Mr. Robinson of Cambridge reckoned them to be about *one-fifth* of the inhabitants in England and Wales.\* Nor are the Dissenters, as a body, more

\* To know the number of the licenses that have been taken out for dissenting places of worship within the last twenty years, particularly in the out parishes of London, and in other large towns, would astonish any person not accustomed to observe the progress of nonconformity. And one great cause of this is doubtless the great increase of population, without a proportionate increase of churches or parochial chapels, for the accommodation of the members of the Established Church.

To erect a dissenting meeting-house, nothing is wanted but enough of money, together with a *shilling over*, to purchase a license from a magistrate; whereas, to build a parochial chapel, or chapel of ease, the incumbent's leave is first of all to be obtained; then the concurrence of the bishop of the diocese must be procured; and, in many cases, an act of parliament also must previously be obtained (which will cost at least 200*l.*) to secure to those who are to be at the charge of the structure, some rights to which they may think themselves entitled. Hence, some

respectable in point of numbers, than of virtue and talents ; for it must be acknowledged, even by their enemies, that not a few have appeared among them, who have been eminently conspicuous, both for piety and learning, and those of the present day do by no means seem to discredit their predecessors.\*

Their ministers, except those of the *Particular Baptists*, who have a small fund to increase their salaries, are, in general, wholly supported by the voluntary contributions of their congregations. They may perform any clerical function, except that of marriage, which, by an act of parliament,

well wishers of the Establishment, to check this growth of sectarianism, &c., would propose a general act of parliament for facilitating the erection of churches and chapels.

\* Bishop Watson, speaking of the Dissenting Clergy, in his *Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury* (1783), says, "I cannot look upon them as inferior to the clergy of the Establishment, either in learning or morals. And Mr. Evans ranks among their ornaments, Baxter, Bates, Howe, Owen, Williams, Neal, Henry, Stennet, Evans, Gale, Foster, Leland, Grosvenor, Watts, Lardner, Abernethy, Doddridge, Grove, Chandler, Gill, Orton, Furneaux, Farmer, Towgood, Robinson, Price, Kippis, and Priestley."—*Sketch*, p. 131-2, edit. 1807.

See a work, in 2 vols. 8vo. 1758, entitled, *The Protestant System ; containing Discourses on the Principal Doctrines of Natural and Revealed Religion*, compiled from the works of the most eminent Protestant Dissenters, wherein are united great piety, talents, and erudition.

The divines, from whose works this compilation is made, are, Abernethy, Amory, Barker, Benson, Bulkeley, Chandler, Doddridge, Duchal, Emlyn, Fordyce, Foster, Grove, Holland, Leechman, Mason, Morris, Newman, &c. &c.

is limited to parish churches and the established clergy only. Their baptisms are registered in a book in the public library of the Dissenters in *Red Cross street*, London; and, by act of parliament, these registers are held valid in law. They are not entitled to a steeple and bells for their places of worship; and not only the members of the established church, but Jews, Quakers, and all denominations of dissenters, must pay their church rates and tithes, and serve parish offices, or forfeit the penalty.

To the books already referred to, on the subject of the rise, progress, &c. of Dissenters, may be added, Mr. Jones's *Essay on the Church*, ch. 5. together with the *Postscript*, and Dr. Eveleigh's *Sermons at the Bampton Lecture*, Oxford.

Having premised so much respecting the *Protestant Dissenters*, and *Non-conformists* in general, I now proceed to give some account of the *Presbyterians*, *Independents*, and *Baptists*; under which three denominations, as already observed, the *Protestant Dissenters* in England have been ranked.

THE  
PRESBYTERIANS IN ENGLAND.

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NAME.—“Those,” says Dr. Doddridge, “who hold every *pastor* to be so a bishop or overseer of his own congregation, as that no other person or body of men have, by divine institution, a power to exercise any superior or pastoral office in it, may, properly speaking, be called (so far at least,) *Congregational*; and it is by a vulgar mistake that any such are called *Presbyterians*; for the *Presbyterian* discipline is exercised by *synods* and *assemblies*, subordinate to each other, and all of them subject to the authority of what is commonly called a *General Assembly*.”\*

This last mode of church government is to be found in Scotland, and has already been detailed. “But the appellation *Presbyterian*, is, in England, appropriated to a large denomination of Dissenters, who have no attachment to the Scotch

\* *Lectures*, vol. ii. p. 342, 4th edit.

mode of church government any more than to Episcopacy; and therefore to this body of Christians, the term *Presbyterian*, in its original sense, is improperly applied. How this misapplication came to pass, cannot be easily determined, but it has occasioned many wrong notions, and should therefore be rectified. English Presbyterians, as they are called, adopt the same mode of church government with the *Independents*, which is the next sect to be mentioned. Their chief difference from the Independents, is, that they are less attached to Calvinism, and consequently admit a greater latitude of religious sentiment.”\*

The Presbyterians in Ireland have not departed so widely from the original constitution of their denomination, and are still governed by presbyteries.

RISE, PROGRESS, &c.—The first presbytery in England was erected at Wandsworth, in Surry, 20th November 1572; which first establishment, as already observed, was called the “*Order of Wandsworth*,” by Field, their minister.† Many of the English who had fled to Geneva, Frankfort,

\* Mr. Evans’s *Sketch*, p. 138.—See above, vol. ii. p. 190, Note.

† See above, Vol. II. p. 296. Eleven elders were chosen, and their offices inscribed in a register, entitled, *The Orders of Wandsworth*; and Fuller says, that “*Secundum usum Wandsworth*” was as much honoured by the Presbyterians, as “*Secundum usum Sarum*” had been by the Romanists.

&c. during the persecution under Queen Mary, returned to England, in the reign of Elizabeth, with strong prepossessions in favour of Calvinistic doctrines and forms; and being dissatisfied with the Established Church, because, in their opinion, it was not formed after a *pure* model, produced a sect of non-conformists, then denominated *Puritans*. They were restless; the age was intolerant; the queen hostile, and despotic in the use of prerogative: hence they were treated, perhaps, with harshness and injustice. From James, though a warm friend to Episcopacy, they experienced greater humanity and mildness. In the reign of Charles I., they met with opposition and vexation from Archbishop Laud, who regarded them with no favourable eye.—Their party, notwithstanding, gradually derived strength from the public measures of the day, and other concurring circumstances, and had a leading share in precipitating the kingdom into civil war. In the course of the conflict, they were depressed and supplanted by the more recent sect of *Independents*; and both *Puritans*, or *Presbyterians*, and Independents, harassed, in every possible way, the national Church; and ultimately succeeded in abolishing Episcopacy, and ejecting the Episcopal clergy. Under Cromwell, who was alike averse to Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, though he found it expedient to show favour to the latter, the Church was delivered to the management of a set of commissioners, consisting partly of Presbyterians and partly of Independents. They were to examine and approve all



those who were to be admitted to benefices; and they disposed of all the livings which had been in the gift of the Crown, of the Bishops, and of Cathedral Churches. For a time the profession of Episcopacy was not even tolerated by the Presbyterians; but upon the restoration of Charles II., an event which they profess to have themselves chiefly brought about, the Church of England resumed its ancient form and government; and by the *Act of Uniformity*, upwards of two thousand of the clergy, attached to Presbyterian discipline, relinquished their cures in one day.—In the reign of Charles I., and during the usurpation of Cromwell, the Dissenters acted cruelly; and, under Charles II., the members of the establishment are accused of having, in some measure, retaliated. A very humorous and satirical character of the Presbyterians of those times is given by Butler, in his description of Hudibras's religion, Canto I.

But men's opinion and conduct change with the times, as in different stages of life we change our thoughts and pursuits, and settle at the age of forty the roving imagination of sixteen. The Modern Presbyterians, so called in England, different from their forefathers, whose turbulence and intolerance they profess to condemn, are perhaps as loyal subjects, and every way as upright and inoffensive in their conduct as any of their neighbours. We are told, that they, and even the Protestant Dissenters in general, "are now friends to universal liberty in religion;" and that "no denomination among them

wishes to have its own way of worship established as the national religion.”\*

Because they disclaim all human authority in matters of religion, some have inferred, that they also disclaim all human authority in civil matters, and have contracted a fondness for equality and republican maxims in the state. But this inference bespeaks neither sound logic nor Christian charity; nor is it well grounded on fact and experience. On the contrary, the present race of Dissenters, I believe, are by no means enemies to civil government, or to the constitution of this country in particular. They have, indeed, at all times been determined enemies to arbitrary power; but happily, this has long ceased to be a distinction between British subjects; and since a well defined freedom has limited the prerogative of the crown, the throne has not perhaps had more faithful supporters, than have been found among dissenters from the Church of England.

A Dialogue, published in Elizabeth's reign, represents the number of Presbyterians then in England as amounting to 100,000;† but what their probable number may be at the present day, I have not yet been able to learn.

\* *Protestant Dissenters' Catechism*, p. 11, edit. 1806.

† *Heylin's History of the Presbyterians*.

## ENGLISH INDEPENDENTS.

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FOR the meaning of the term *Independent*, together with some account of this class of Protestant dissenters down to the year 1691, when they entered into an association with the Presbyterians, see the Article *Independency and Independents*, above, Vol. II. p. 310, &c.

In regard to the term, or name itself, I would further observe here, that the distinguishing names of the various communions into which the Christian world is unhappily divided, fail to convey just views of the differences which subsist among them; and that this appears from this consideration, among many others, that the other two classes of Protestant dissenters, particularly the Baptists, may as properly be denominated Independents, as those to whom that name has been appropriated; each of these last two bodies having, from their origin, agreed in their views of the nature, constitution, and government of the Christian church.

At the above æra, the Independents and Presbyterians, called, from that association, the *United*

*Brethren*,\* were agreed with regard to doctrines, being generally Calvinists, and differed only with respect to ecclesiastical discipline; but at present, though the English Independents and Presbyterians form two distinct parties of Protestant dissenters, they are distinguished by very trifling differences with regard to church government, and the denominations are more arbitrarily used to comprehend those who differ in theological opinions; the former being more attached to *Calvinism* than the latter.†

Although this denomination disclaim, with the other classes of Independents, every form of union between churches, and do not legislate for each other, in the strict sense of the term; yet they have regulations for the admission of each other's members to occasional communion;—they distinctly recognise each other;—they unite in se-

\* This name, however, is no longer in use, as applied to them, but has long become in a manner the distinctive appellation of the *Moravians*.

† Independents, in general, agree with the Presbyterians, “in maintaining the identity of presbyters and bishops, and believe, that a plurality of presbyters, pastors, or bishops, in one church, is taught in Scripture, rather than the common usage of one bishop over many congregations;” but they conceive their own mode of discipline to be “as much beyond the Presbyterian, as Presbytery is preferable to Prelacy.”—One distinguishing feature of their discipline, is, that they maintain “the right of the church, or body of Christians, to determine who shall be admitted into their communion, and also to exclude from their fellowship those who may prove themselves unworthy members.”—*St Matth. xviii. v. 15—17.*

veral county associations; and certain ministers and lay gentlemen in London manage, in common, a fund which is distributed among poor churches in the country.

A more general association has also been lately formed, called, *The Independent Union*, which the ministers and churches throughout England have been encouraged to join; but this plan, we are told, may admit of further modifications, and should perhaps, for the present, be viewed merely as an experiment.

From 1642, when they had begun to make a figure, the Independents are very frequently mentioned in the English annals of the 17th century; and they complain, that various charges have been unfairly alleged against them by several historians, as *Clarendon*, *Echard*, *Parker*, and particularly by *Rapin*; and, among others, that they were disaffected to kingly government. They have, indeed, been very generally ranked among the regicides, and charged with the death of Charles I. ;\* but

\* This treasonable deed is a transaction of such a figure in history, that it must ever remain a stain upon all those, whoever they were, who were concerned in it. Happy would it be for the English nation, could the shame that attends it be accepted by heaven as an atonement!

After considering the subject with some attention, I am led to conclude, with L'Estrange, that the Independents cut off the head of *Charles Stuart*, after the Presbyterians had murdered the *king*.

“Regem primò a Presbyterianis interemptum, Carolum deinde ab Independentibus interfectum.”—Or, as Sal-

whether this charge be admitted in the whole, or only in part, it does not appear from any of their public and acknowledged writings, that republican principles formed, at any time, any of their distinguishing characteristics; and there is no room to doubt, that the present Independents are steady friends to a limited monarchy.—And though the Independents have thus met with no favour at home, they have found two zealous defenders abroad, in *Lewis de Moulin* and *Dr. Mosheim*; and there may no doubt be much truth in what the latter remarks;—that the denomination of *Independents* is ambiguous, and was sometimes used to denote those who preferred a democratical or popular government, of whom there were many in the reign of Charles I.

masius expresses it, in his *Defensio Regia*, “Presbyteriani ligarunt, Independentes vero immolarunt sacrificium.”—Nor was the horrid deed merely perpetrated, but also vindicated, by the latter, in a sermon, preached by the otherwise respectable Dr. Owen, their principal leader, before the (shall I say *honourable*?) House of Commons, the very day after they had embued their hands in this innocent and royal blood. The Presbyterians would gladly throw the whole blame of this dreadful crime on the Independents; but that they themselves were equally zealous in promoting the rebellion and all its consequences, we have the evidence of one, whose veracity few will doubt, and whose knowledge no one can question;—I mean, of the celebrated *Milton*, who moved with no common activity in all those turbulent scenes.—See his *Life*, prefixed to his prose works, p. 24.

Since then, in all cases of murder, the accessory becomes a principal, both parties (or the two factions bearing their names) may fairly be pronounced as equally guilty.—“My soul, come not thou into their secrets,” &c.

and under the administration of Cromwell;—and also, that most of the religious sects, which then divided the English nation, assumed the name of *Independents*, to screen themselves from the reproaches of the public, under a name at that time highly respectable:—so that to these factions, rather than to the true and real Independents, may be ascribed those scenes of sedition and misery, whose unhappy effects are still justly lamented.\*

This denomination, considered as a distinct class of the Protestant Dissenters, and without including the other two, is highly respectable in point of numbers, being supposed to be more numerous in England and Wales, than both the parties of Baptists together. But, as the Independents generally admit Baptists to their communion, there has been such an intermixture, both of pastors and of members, in some congregations, that it would be difficult to know under what denomination they should be classed.†

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.—*Independency* being the prevailing constitution of the Protestant Dissenters in general, and as an affection to it in preference to every other mode of church government has, of late years, been growing upon many

\* Major-general Harrison, who suffered at the Restoration as one of the regicides, was a *Baptist*.

† Bogue and Bennet's *History*, vol. i. p. 143, where they refer on this subject to J. Ryland's *Funeral Sermon for Joshua Symmonds*; and J. Sutcliff's *Account of the Bedford Church*, subjoined to it.

in Scotland, as well as in England, I close this article in the language of a clergyman of the church of England to an Independent minister :—

“ The constitution of your Churches,” says the former, “ which you suppose the only one agreeable to scripture, appears to me faulty, in giving a greater power to the people than the scripture authorises. There is doubtless a sense in which ministers are not only the servants of the Lord, but, for his sake, the servants of the churches ; but it is a service which implies rule, and is entitled to respect. Thus the Apostle says, ‘ Obey them that have the rule over you.’ Their office is that of a steward, who is neither to lord it over the household, nor to be entirely under subjection to it, but to superintend and provide for the family. Scriptural regulations are wisely and graciously adapted to our state of infirmity, but I think the power which the people with you claim and attempt to exercise, is not so. Many of them, though truly gracious persons, may, notwithstanding, from their situation in life, their want of education, and the narrowness of their views, be very incapable of government ; yet when a number of such are associated according to your plan, under the honourable title of a Church of Christ, they acquire a great importance. Almost every individual conceives himself qualified to judge and to guide the minister ; to sift and scrutinise his expressions, and to tell him what and how he ought to preach. But the poorer part of your flocks are not always the most troublesome. The rich can contribute most



to the minister's support, who is often entirely dependent upon his people for a maintenance; their riches, likewise, give them some additional weight and influence in the church; and the officers, whom you call the Deacons, are usually chosen from among the more wealthy. But it is not always found, that the most wealthy church-members are the most eminent either for grace or wisdom. We may be rather sure, that riches, if the possessors are not proportionably humble and spiritual, have a direct tendency to nourish the worms of self-conceit and self-will. Such persons expect to be consulted, and that their judgment shall be followed. The preaching must be suited to their taste and sentiment; and if any thing is either enforced or censured, which bears hard upon their conduct, they think themselves ill-treated. Although a faithful minister, in his better hours, disdains the thought of complying with the caprice of his hearers, or conniving at their faults; yet human nature is weak, and, it must be allowed, that in such circumstances he stands in a state of temptation. And if he has grace to maintain his integrity, yet it is painful and difficult to be obliged frequently to displease those on whom we depend, and who, in some other respects, may be our best friends and benefactors. I can truly say, that my heart has been grieved for the opposition, neglect, and unkindness, which some valuable men among you have, to my knowledge, met with from those, who ought to have esteemed them very highly for their work's sake.

“ The effects of this supreme power, lodged in the people, and of the unsanctified spirit in which it has been exercised, have been often visible in the divisions and subdivisions, which have crumbled large societies into separate handfuls, if I may so speak. And to this, I am afraid, rather than to the spread of a work of grace, may be ascribed, in many instances, the great increase of the number of your churches of late years.”\*

\* *Apologia*, &c. (as above, vol. ii. p. 522, note,) p. 131—6.

## BAPTISTS.

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NAMES.—The members of this denomination are so called, on account of their views of the ordinance of Baptism differing from those of the generality of other Christians. As they hold that baptism is to be administered to those *only* who can and do give evidence of repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ, they are constrained, by natural consequence, to disapprove of the admission of *Infants* to that ordinance. Hence they have been styled *Anti pædo-baptists*; a term, perhaps, more appropriate than the other, as their opponents do by no means admit the propriety of the exclusive application to them of the name of *Baptists*, since *is* seems to imply that they alone practise true scriptural baptism. They also consider *immersion* in water as essential to Christian baptism. And as it happens that many of those whom they baptise have undergone, what they term the ceremony of sprinkling in their infancy—they have

been called *Inbaptists*; as though they baptised “*αγα*” over again, which they themselves of course do not admit, conceiving, that those who have undergone that ceremony in their infancy, did not thereby receive Christian baptism.

These appellations have been applied to them almost solely in Britain and America. On the continent, they are known by different names, as *Menonites*, &c. : and indeed, it may be observed, that the name of *Baptist* being only of modern date, and local application, cannot serve as an index throughout ecclesiastical history, to the existence of the *sentiment*. This appears evident from their rise and progress, recorded below.

RISE, PROGRESS, &c.—The true origin of this sect, Mosheim says, is hid in the remote depths of antiquity, and is, of consequence, extremely difficult to be ascertained. It seems, however, not only from this writer, but also from other historians, that many of the *Hussites*, in the 15th century—of the *Wickliffites*, or *Lollards*, in the 14th—of the *Petrobrussians*, in the 12th—and also of the *Waldenses*, were Baptists in sentiment. Much of the present felicity of this denomination on the continent may, however, without ambiguity, be traced up to the laborious efforts of *Menno Simon*, a native of Friesland, from whom they have been known by the name of *Menonites*. Having been a Romish priest, and as he himself confesses, a notorious

profligate, he resigned his office and rank in the church of Rome, and publicly embraced the communion of the Anabaptists in 1536. From that time, his conduct seems to have been correct and exemplary, and soon after being solicited by many of his brethren, to assume the rank and functions of a public teacher, he laboured among them, both in Holland and Germany, with such zeal and success, till the period of his death, in 1561, that he has been styled, on the continent, the parent and apostle of the Baptists.—Of the Menonites, Dr. Mosheim says, they are *not entirely mistaken*, when they boast their descent from the *Waldenses*, *Petrobrussians*, and other ancient sects. On the contrary, these are described as having maintained, *in common* with the Menonites, a doctrine which he considers as the *true source of all the peculiarities* of their descendants. *And it is most certain*, he adds, that the greatest part of these peculiarities were approved of by many of those who, *before the dawn of the Reformation*, entertained the doctrine already referred to.\* Hence, while the Baptists are spoken of in history as rising from their “*hiding places*” in Luther’s day, their sentiments are considered as having been concealed in almost all Europe, until the noble intrepidity of this man

\* The doctrine here alluded to, was, “That the kingdom of Christ, or the visible church he had established upon earth, was an assembly of true and real saints, and ought therefore to be inaccessible to the wicked and unrighteous, and also to be exempt from all those institutions which human prudence suggests to oppose the progress of iniquity, or to correct and reform transgressors.”

fixed the public attention upon them, as upon other reformed sects.

The Anabaptists of Germany, who were nursed by their leaders, *Storck*, *Stubner*, and *Munzer*, about the year 1525, are considered by the Baptists of the present day, and their genuine ancestors, as wearing manifestly the appearance of a political cabal, and not the fervent exertions of a Christian sect. For, besides their views of baptism, they maintained, that, among Christians, who had the precepts of the gospel to direct, and the spirit of God to guide them, the office of magistracy was not only unnecessary, but an unlawful encroachment on their spiritual liberty;—that the distinctions occasioned by birth, or rank, or wealth, being contrary to the spirit of the gospel, which considers all men as equal, should be entirely abolished;—that all Christians, throwing their possessions into one common stock, should live together in that state of equality which becomes members of the same family;—and that, as neither the laws of nature, nor the precepts of the New Testament, had imposed any restraint upon men, with regard to the number of wives which they might marry, they should use that liberty which God himself had granted to the patriarchs.

Such opinions, propagated and maintained with enthusiastic zeal and boldness, and at length even by force of arms, soon produced the violent effects natural to them; and many places suffered severely from them, particularly the imperial city

of *Munster*, in Westphalia, which they seized, and one *John Bockhold*, or *Beukels*, a journeyman tailor of Leyden, and the king of this new Jerusalem, defended himself in it as long as possible; but the place was at length taken, and this their ringleader put to a most painful and ignominious death, in 1536.

Many of these people might oppose *infant baptism*; but they are understood to have used *sprinkling* with water. Many of them also were of no principle, and many were professed Roman Catholics. The reason, however, why the Menonites and others have been confounded with these deluded wicked people is, that, owing simply to their views of *baptism*, they were at that period involved in one common whirlpool of vengeance. “Why were the innocent and the guilty involved in the same fate?” asks Dr. Mosheim.—“Those who had no other marks of peculiarity, than their administering baptism to adult persons only, and their excluding the unrighteous from the external communion of the church, ought undoubtedly to have met with milder treatment than what was given to those seditious incendiaries, who were for unhooking all government, and destroying all civil authority.”

Fourteen Anabaptists, we are told, were put to death in England in 1535, and thirty others were banished, in 1539, for their opinions, in the reign of Henry the Eighth. Yet Bishop Burnet remarks, that, in 1547, there were many Anabaptists in several parts of England, and that they were gene-

rally Germans, whom the revolutions in their own country had banished from home.\* The Bishop further adds, that in Queen Elizabeth's reign they greatly increased, and were subjected to imprisonment. Some few, indeed, recanted their errors, as Fuller observes, but two were burnt in Smithfield, A. D. 1575.

In the reign of James I. among the persecuted exiles that fled to Holland, were several Anabaptists; and in the same reign, Edward Wightman, a Baptist, of Burton-upon-Trent, was burnt at Litchfield. He was the last person "that suffered this cruel kind of death in England; and it may be remarked, that William Sawtre, the first that suffered in that manner, for his religious opinions, was supposed to have denied infant baptism: so that this sect had the honour both of leading the way, and bringing up the rear of all the martyrs who were burnt alive in England, as well as that a great number of those who suffered this death for their religion, in the 200 years between, were of this denomination."†

Having thus been exposed to many severities, the Baptists were slow in getting a sure footing

\* Many of them were Hollanders, and, notwithstanding Fuller's exultation, "that our countrymen were free from the infection," it is highly probable, that Englishmen, as well as foreigners, were found in their societies.

† Bishop Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, Part II. p. 100, &c. and *The History of Religion, particularly of the principal Denominations of Christians*, Vol. IV. p. 195-7. Ed. 1764, 8vo.



in England; for Neale places their first congregation there so late as in 1640,\* when they separated from the Independents, under a *Mr. Jesse*. And from that time they have ever prevailed there more or less, and now subsist under two separate and distinct societies, distinguished by different names; those who have followed the doctrines of Calvin, being called *Particular Baptists*, from particular election, the principal point of that system;—and those who profess the Arminian or Remonstrant tenets, being denominated *General Baptists*, from the chief of those tenets, general, or universal redemption.

Several Anabaptists emigrated to New England about the same time that the Independents settled in that country; *i. e.* about 1620, or soon after; when their congregational brethren, though they had themselves fled from persecution, gave no great latitude to their tender consciences.† They have,

*(See 'An' of N. E. Baptists)*

\* The anonymous author of the work last cited remarks, that they “began to separate themselves from the Puritans, and to form societies distinct and apart of those of their own persuasion, in the year 1633.”—*Ib.* p. 200.

Mess. Bogue and Bennett place their separation still higher, and remark, that they “are mentioned as a distinct sect in this country, as early as the year 1608.”—*History of Dissenters*, Vol. I. p. 150.

† It is obvious to remark here, that the conduct of the American Independents, for some time, towards both the Baptists and Quakers, was but little consistent with that of their brethren, whom they left behind them in England; for Mr. Hume (ch. 57.) states the Independents to have been the first sect which, during its prosperity and adver-

notwithstanding, maintained their ground in America ever since, and have been gradually increasing their numbers; so that the communicants, and other members of the Baptist congregations in the *United States* alone, are now computed to be 255,670.\*

Mention is made of Baptists at Leith, during the Interregnum; but it does not appear that any regular society of this denomination can be traced in Scotland farther back than about the year 1767.—See the article *Scottish Baptists*, below.

See Sleidan's *History of the German Anabaptists*, translated by Bohun;—Crosby's *History of the Baptists*, 4 vols. 8vo.;—Edward's *History of the American Baptists*;—and Dr. Wall's *Infant Baptism*, Part II. chap. viii. sect. 4.†

sity, always adopted the principle of toleration, unless towards Popery and Prelacy, which he allows were treated by them with rigour.

“The Presbyterians,” says Mr. Gray, “called toleration an hideous monster; the great *Diana* of the Independents.”—*Bampf. Lect.* p. 284, note.

\* Hannah Adams's *View of Religions*, p. 459, 12mo. Edit. 1805; where it is remarked, that “this account was taken by Mr. John Asplund, who visited the several associations of Baptist Churches for that purpose.”

† The late Mr. Robinson of Cambridge also wrote a *History of Baptism*, but many of the Baptists themselves have no high opinion of this performance; and it has been remarked, that in the whole course of his quarto volume, Mr. Robinson very seldom mentions Mr. Wall's writings on Infant Baptism, though viewed, by Pædo-Baptists, as standard works on the subject.

**DISTINGUISHING TENETS.**—The members of this denomination, as already remarked, are distinguished from all other professing Christians, by their opinions respecting the ordinance of Christian Baptism.

Conceiving that positive institutions cannot be established by *analogical* reasoning, but are dependent on the will of the Saviour, revealed in *express precept*, and that apostolical example illustrative of this, is the rule of duty—they differ from their Christian brethren both with regard to the *subjects* and the *mode* of baptism.

As to the *subjects*;—from the command which Christ gave after his resurrection, they conceive them to be those who *believe* what the Apostles were then *enjoined to preach*, and *those only*; baptism being there mentioned as *consequent* to faith in the gospel. So, when the Ethiopian eunuch asked the evangelist Philip, “What doth *hinder* me to be baptised?” he answered, “*If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.*”—“They that *gladly received the word were baptised;*” and, it is said, “Many of the Corinthians *hearing, believed, and were baptised.*”

With respect to the *mode*;—they say, that instead of sprinkling or pouring, the person is to be *immersed* in the water. *Immersion* or *plunging* being, they maintain, the primary and common signification, both in sacred and profane authors, of the Greek term βαπτισμα; one of the words

which was *adopted*, (by royal authority),\* without translation, into the English Version of the Sacred Scriptures. They again refer to primitive practice, and observe, that both the baptiser and the baptised having *gone down into* the water, the latter is baptised *in it*, when they both *come up out of it*. John, they say, baptised *in the Jordan*; and Jesus is said, when thus baptised, to *come up out of it*. Believers are said also to be "*buried with Christ by Baptism into death, wherein also they are risen with him*:"—a *doctrinal* allusion incompatible, they insist, with any other mode.

But their views of this institution, they say, are much more confirmed, and may be better understood, by studying its *nature and import*. It is, in their estimation, an impressive *emblem* of *that*, through which their sins are remitted or washed away—and of *that* on account of which the Holy Spirit is given to them who obey the Messiah. In other words, they consider Christian baptism to be a *figurative representation* of that which the *gospel of Jesus is in a testimony*;† to which the mind of the baptised is therefore naturally led, while spectators are to consider him as professing his faith in the gospel, and his subjection to the Redeemer. They would say, therefore, that none except those who appear to believe this gospel ought to be baptised,—and that *immer-*

\* King James VI. prescribed 14 rules to be very carefully observed by the translators. It is the third which is here referred to.—See *Lewis, or Newcome's Bib. Trans.*

† Comp. 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. with Rom. vi. 3, 4. and Coloss. ii. 14.

sion is not, to speak with propriety, a *mode* of baptism—but *baptism itself*.

With regard to Infants—Jesus said, “*Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*” Although they see no warrant for baptising them here (or any where else) this express assurance of the divine favour, towards their children, is one in which they have strong faith, and from which they profess to have often derived much consolation.

Thus the English and most foreign Baptists consider a *personal profession of faith*, and an *immersion\** in water, as essential to baptism. The profession of faith is generally made before the congregation, at a Church meeting; when some have a creed, and expect the candidate to assent to it, and to give a circumstantial account of his conversion; while others only require him to profess his faith as a Christian.

The former generally consider baptism as an ordinance, which initiates persons into a particu-

\* The Menonites in Pennsylvania administer baptism to none but adults, but they do not baptise by *immersion*. Their common method is this;—“the person to be baptised kneels—the minister holds his hands over him, into which the deacon pours water, and through which it runs on the crown of the kneeling person’s head—after which follow imposition of hands and prayer.”—Edwards’s *History of the American Baptists*, Vol. I. p. 90.

lar church; and they say that, without breach of Christian liberty, they have a right to expect an agreement in articles of faith in their own societies.

The latter think that baptism initiates merely into a profession of the Christian religion in general, and therefore say that they have no right to require an assent to their creed from such as do not purpose to join their communion; and they quote the baptism of the eunuch in proof, as related in the 8th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

The Baptists used to administer baptism in public waters; and a circumstantial account of a *public* baptism which took place, not many years ago, in the river at Whittlesford, a village about seven miles from Cambridge, may be seen in Mr. Robinson's *History of the Baptists*, or in Mr. Evans's *Sketch of the Denominations of the Christian world*.

But they now more frequently administer baptism in their *baptistries*, (as being more convenient,) which are in, or near, their places of worship, either with the attendance of the candidate's friends only, or in the presence of the congregation.—Unordained ministers frequently baptise; and many among them allege, that a deacon may with propriety baptise. But I am not aware that this prevails among the Independents, though they also occasionally admit of lay preachers.

Some, both of the *General* and the *Particular*

*Baptists*, object to *free or mixed communion*,\* and do not allow of persons who have been baptised in their infancy, to join in the celebration of the Lord's Supper with them; because they look upon such as not having been baptised at all, and consequently inadmissible to the other ordinance.†

Others, however, of both classes of Baptists, suppose that this ought to be no objection; and that such as *believe themselves* to be really baptised, though in infancy—such as are partakers of grace, belong to the true Church of Christ, and are truly devoted to God, ought not to be rejected on account of a different opinion about this particular ordinance.

Some of these also, without referring to a man's persuasion that he has been baptised, are of opinion that he should be received to the fellowship of the Churches on the general ground of Christian character; so that should he, with many Unitarians, doubt the perpetuity of baptism, or that it is a perpetual ordinance, as it respects the descendants of Christians, though it may properly be ad-

\* This term is made use of by the Baptists in relation to the Lord's Supper; and they understand by it, that all those who have been baptised, whether in their infancy or adult age, may, on profession of their faith, sit down at the Lord's Table with others of different denominations.

† I have here used the language of the Baptists themselves, who, with the Dissenters in general, seem to prefer the word *ordinance* to sacrament; on what grounds I know not, but I trust on somewhat better than merely because this latter is adopted by the Church from which they dissent.

ministered to proselytes from other religions, he ought still, if agreeable to his own views, to be admitted as a communicant at the Lord's Supper.

This difference of opinion between them has been thought so important, that the reasons for and against the practice on both sides, and their mutual censures of each other, have been laid before the public by warm advocates on each side of the question.—“ Mr. *Killingworth* and Mr. *Abraham Booth* have written against free communion; but *John Bunyan*, Dr. *James Foster*, Mr. *Charles Bulkely*, Mr. *John Wiche*, for many years a respectable general Baptist minister at Maidstone, and Mr. *Robinson* of Cambridge, have contended for it.”\*

Some of both classes of the Baptists are, at the same time, *Sabbatarians*, and, with the Jews, observe the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath, from a persuasion that all the ten commandments are in their nature strictly moral; and that the observation of the seventh day was never abrogated or repealed by our Saviour, or his Apostles.†

Of *Seventh-day Baptists*, however, there are now but few; and even they appear to be chiefly confined to America.

\* Mr. Evans, who very justly views it as matter of regret, that such disputes should ever have arisen.

† Several tracts in support of this doctrine were published by Mr. *Cornthwaite*, a respectable American Baptist, about 1740.—See the article *Sabbatarians* below.



WORSHIP, CHURCH GOVERNMENT, AND DISCIPLINE.—On these subjects the Baptists differ but little from the Independents, except that the *General Baptists* have, in some of their churches, three distinct orders of ministers, separately ordained; to the highest of which, they give the name of *Messengers*, to the *second* that of *Elders*, and to the *third* that of *Deacons*; much in the same sense of the word as used in the New Testament.\*

Regarding excommunication, they seem closely to follow our Saviour's directions, in the 18th chapter of St. Mathew's gospel, which they apply to differences between individuals; and if any man is guilty of scandalous immorality, or perseveres in any line of conduct inconsistent with the Christian profession, he is excluded from the brotherhood, or fellowship of the church, which is all the punishment that they or the Independents in general deem it lawful to inflict for offences against religion.

Like the other *Protestant Dissenters*, and the Presbyterians in Scotland, &c. the Baptists "receive the Lord's Supper, sitting at a common

\* See *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Mr. William Whiston*, Part iii. p. 466.

A deacon, among Dissenters, unites with his brethren (each congregation usually containing more than one) in taking care of the poor, settling with the minister, and distributing the sacramental elements. Many Baptists allege, that he may also with propriety baptise.

table, and handing the elements one to another;”\* a practice unknown in the primitive church, in which the sacrament was received by the communicants sometimes standing and sometimes kneeling; but there is no trace in any ancient writer of its having ever been received sitting.”†

CLASSES AND EMINENT MEN.—The Baptists, who are to be found in Great Britain, Ireland, Holland, Germany, the United States of America, Upper Canada, &c. are divided in England, &c. as already observed, into two distinct *classes*, or societies, which have but little communication with one another, viz. the *Particular*, or *Calvinistic*, and the *General*, or *Arminian* Baptists.

The *former* of these two classes is said to be far more numerous than the latter, and to have nearly 400 meeting-houses in England; of which 15 are within the bills of mortality in London.‡

\* Dr. Hey's *Norris. Lectures*, vol. iv. p. 333.—Such, I believe, is the general practice of the Presbyterians and Independents, both at home and abroad; but the doctor should no doubt have remarked, in regard to the English Baptists, that the deacons (and in some few instances the ministers,) take the elements from pew to pew.

† Bishop Pretyman, *on Art.* 28. It will not be fair to conclude from these words of the learned bishop, that he meant to intimate that our Lord's apostles *kneeled* or *stood*, when that ordinance was originally instituted.

See Bishop Buckeridge on *Kneeling at the Communion*, 4to. 1618, or Bennett's *Abridgment of the London Cases*.

‡ It appears from Dr. Rippon's Baptist Register, that the number of Particular Baptist congregations in England

It prevails also in the East and West Indies, and in North America, particularly in Connecticut; and between the Baptists there and those in England, there is said to be still some communication.

Ordination is performed among this class of Baptists almost in the same way as among Independents; but with the Methodists, they, as well as the Independents, have several lay preachers. They have a small fund to assist towards the maintenance of their ministers; and the most distinguished of their society are, perhaps, Dr. Gill, the well-known author of a Commentary on the Bible, *Body of Divinity*, &c.; Mr. John Bunyan, author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, &c.; Dr. Samuel Stennett, and his father and grandfather.

The father of the *General Baptists* is said to have been a Mr. Smith, who was at first a clergyman of the church of England; but resigning his living in the church, he went over to Holland, where his baptist principles were warmly opposed by Messrs. Ainsworth and Robinson; the former

in December 1798, amounted to three hundred and sixty-one, being thirty-five more than in May 1794; that the numbers of most congregations were greatly increasing; and that their Itinerant Society in London were making great exertions in Cornwall, Salop, Devon, and the north part of Somersetshire, &c.

The Baptist congregations in Wales amounted to eighty-four.—Total of England and Wales, at that period, four hundred and forty-five.

then pastor of the Brownists, or Independents, at Amsterdam, and the latter of those at Leyden.

As Mr. Smith thought there was no one at the time duly qualified to administer the ordinance of baptism, he baptised himself, for which he was called a *Se-baptist*. He afterwards adopted the Arminian doctrines; and this subdivision of Baptists published, about the year 1611, a Confession of Faith, “which diverges much farther from Calvinism, than those who are now called Arminians would approve.”\*

They are, however, said to be declining at present, and “a considerable number” of them, it would appear, “have gone into Socinianism or Arianism; on account of which, several of their ministers and churches, who disapprove of these principles, have, within the last forty years, formed themselves into a distinct connexion, called *The New Association*. The churches in this union, keep up a friendly acquaintance, in some out-

\* Messrs. Bogue and Bennett’s *History of the Dissenters*, vol. i. p. 150.

Yet it is remarkable, that in a small treatise, which “appears to be written, or approved of by the whole body of Baptists then in England,” and was published in 1616, wherein they endeavoured to justify their separation from the Church of England and to prove the right of private judgment in matters of religion, &c.; this Confession of Faith, published in 1611, is referred to for their loyalty and orthodoxy.

See *The History of Religion*, 8vo. vol. iv. p. 198, 199.

Are we hence to conclude, that *all* the English Baptists were then Arminians?

ward things, with those from whom they have separated; but in things more essential, disclaim any connexion with them; particularly as to changing ministers, and the admission of members.”\*

The same affection, in many of this class of Baptists, to Arianism, and Socinianism, had before been remarked by Dr. Mosheim, in his *Eccles. History*, and Mr. Wendeburn, in his *History of England*; but as to what the doctor further remarks, that they “are, for the most part, persons of mean condition, and almost totally destitute of learning and knowledge;” this will not readily be granted by those who know that they in general, rank higher in the scale of society than their brethren of the other class; and that among their eminent men may be ranked the names of Gale, Foster, Burroughs, Foot, Noble, Bulkely, Wiche, Robinson, † &c.; not to mention those of several very respectable ministers, who are now labouring among them.

Their general assembly, before which a sermon is preached by one of their ministers, is held annually in *Worship-street*, London, on the Teusday (formerly on the Wednesday) in Whitsunweek; when the affairs of their churches are taken into consideration: and Mr. Evans remarks that they have thus met together for upwards of a century.

\* Mr. Fuller’s edit. of Hannah Adams’s *View of Religions*, 12mo 1805, p. 86, where Mr. F. refers to Rippon’s *B. p. Register*, vol. i. p. 172-5.

† Mr. Whiston’s name might perhaps have been added to this list, for it appears that he became a member of this community.

Much praise is due to the members of this denomination for their zeal and exertions in converting the heathen. After no small attention paid by some of them to the subject of missions, the Particular Baptists formed a missionary society in 1793, when they sent out to India, as Missionaries, Messrs. John Thomas, and William Carey, who have been followed, from time to time, by others, by whom the knowledge of Christianity, as understood and professed by them, has been zealously and assiduously propagated, insomuch, that the Baptists now bid fair to rival the Moravians in their endeavours to spread the knowledge of the gospel in heathen lands; and should they be equally gifted with patient endurance and perseverance, they may, in time, become much more successful than them, by the exertions which they are now making in translating the Scriptures into the languages of the East.

The chief seat of the mission has been at *Serampore*, in Bengal, since 1800; and the following is the state of the translations, as given by Mr. Carey, at the end of the year 1807: "The work of *printing* the Scriptures is now going on in six languages, and that of *translating* them in six more. The *Bengalee* is all printed, except from Judges 7th to the end of Esther. The *Sungscrit* New Testament, to Acts 27; the *Orissa*, to John 21; the *Mahratta* (2d Ed.) to the end of Matthew; the *Hindostanee* (new version,) to Mark 5; and Matthew is begun printing in *Gujerratee*.

“ The translation is carried on nearly to the end of John, in *Chinese, Telinga, Kurnata*, and the language of the *Seeks*. It is also carried on to a pretty large extent in *Persian*, and begun in *Burman*.”

*Brief Narrative of the Baptist Mission in India*, 8vo, 1808, p. 66, to which the reader is referred.— See also another Tract, 12mo, 1808, entitled, *Memoir relative to the Translations of the Sacred Scriptures, to the Baptist Missionary Society in England*. See likewise below, the article *Societies for propagating the Gospel*.

WRITERS FOR AND AGAINST PÆDOBAPTISM.—The question concerning infant baptism, has long proved a fruitful source of discussion, and the writings on both sides are numerous. Dr. Wall, a learned divine of the church of England, ably defended the practice of baptising infants, in a controversy which he had on the subject with Dr. Gale, about the beginning of the last century; and there has been a more recent one between Dr. Edward Williams and Mr. Abraham Booth. A candid statement of the arguments on both sides of the question, may be seen in the 2d vol. of Dr. Doddridge's *Lectures*. See likewise Dr. Rippon's *Baptist Register*, and Mr. Bulkley's *Two Discourses on Catholic Communion*, relating in particular to the different sentiments of Christians concerning Baptism.

In defence of the practice of Anti-pædobaptism, may also be mentioned Dr. Gill's *Answer*

to Mr. Towgood's *Baptism of infants a reasonable service*; Dr. Stennett's *Remarks on the Christian Minister's Reasons for administering Baptism by sprinkling or pouring of Water*; Mr. Jenkin's *Inconsistency of Infant sprinkling with Christian Baptism, with religious usefulness, and with salvation by Christ alone*; Mr. Richard's *History of Antichrist, or Free Thoughts on the Corruptions of Christianity*; *The Baptists Vindicated*, by Isaiah Bert; and Mr. Abraham Booth's *Pædobaptism examined on the Principles, Concessions, and Reasonings of the most learned Pædobaptists.*"

On the other side, much also has been said and written. Soon after the first appearance of the Anabaptists, many protestant divines, particularly Luther himself, Melancthon, Calvin, Zuinglius, Bullinger, Regius, &c. strenuously opposed them, and refuted their arguments, in several public conferences.\*

Among the numerous later works, recourse may be had to Dr. Wall on *Infant Baptism*, and to an abstract of it for the use of the poor, entitled, *A Conference between two Men that had doubts about Infant Baptism*, 12mo, Rivingtons, 1795; to Dr. Fleming's *Plea for Infants*, and the Appendix and his Defence; Dr. Taylor's *Covenant of Grace, and Baptism the token of it, explained upon Scripture principles*; Mr. Brekell's *Pædobaptism*, and *Pædobaptism Defended*; Dr. Addington's *Chris-*

\* Spanheim, *De Origine Anabaptistarum*.



*tian Minister's Reasons for baptising Infants, and for administering the Ordinance by sprinkling or pouring of Water*; Mr. Robins's edition of Mr. Matthew Henry's *MS. Treatise on Baptism*; and Dr. Edward Williams's *Anti-pædobaptism examined*.

These men rest their arguments in defence of infant baptism on the following grounds, among others:—That the children of proselytes to the Jewish religion were baptised along with their parents;—that baptism has succeeded instead of the rite of circumcision;—that households, probably, (say they,) including children, were baptised by the apostles, as we read in the Acts;\*—that the words of the apostle, 1 Cor. vii. v. 14, have a direct reference to infant baptism;—that our Lord shewed an affectionate regard for children;—that the baptism of infants was practised in the primitive church;†—and that it is the means of impressing the minds of parents with a sense of the duties which they owe their offspring, upon the right discharge of which depend the welfare and happiness of the rising generation. They also observe, that it is said in Scripture, that children are capable of being admitted into the kingdom of heaven, and at the same time, that “except a man be born of water, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God:” Since, therefore, say they, children are capable of entering into the kingdom of God; it must

\* Chap. xvi. v. 15. 33. See also 1 Cor. i. 16.

† Dr. Priestley takes and maintains this ground in his *Letter to an Anti-pædobaptist*, to which the Rev. Job David, of Taunton, has made a short reply.

follow, that they are also qualified for being admitted into the church by baptism.

In addition to the works referred to above, in favour of Pædo-baptism, may be mentioned a small work, published in 1803, entitled, *Infant Baptism Vindicated, or, an Attempt to shew, that Anabaptism is unnecessary; and separation from the Church of England on that account unlawful.* By a Clergyman of the Church of England.

Mr. Tombes, one of the best and most candid of the Baptist writers, is said to have lived in the church, to have conformed in every point, but that of baptism, to the Episcopal establishment, and to have written against separation from it. He, we are told, is the only solitary instance of a Baptist, who was not a strict *Independent*.

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.—It is a distinguishing tenet of the Baptists, as well as of the Independents, to admit of no opinions or rites which are not countenanced by apostolic precept or example, and conceiving that they find neither the one nor the other for the baptism of infants, they disclaim it, notwithstanding the arguments from tradition, &c. that are alleged in its defence. But though, as Dr. Hey observes, “all those, seemingly, who are against infant baptism must deny original sin;”<sup>\*</sup> this does not hold good in fact, there being no sect or party of Christians

<sup>\*</sup> *Norrisian Lectures*, vol. iii. p. 146.

among whom more strenuous supporters of original sin are to be found than among the Particular Baptists.

The Baptists in England separate from the Establishment for the same reasons as their brethren of the other denominations of Dissenters do; and from additional motives derived from their particular tenets respecting baptism. Before the act of Toleration, they were liable to pains and penalties as Non-conformists, and often for their peculiar sentiments as Baptists;\* but by this act they are now protected in the exercise of their worship in common with other Dissenters.

In regard to the *mode* of baptism, by *immersion*, they are by no mean singular, for thus it is still administered in the Greek and Russian Churches; and thus it is enjoined in the case of all those who are thought capable of submitting to it in this manner in the Church of England, though it is never practised. But, according to some, the question with the Baptists is not so properly in regard either to the *subjects* or to the *mode* of baptism, as whether it should be administered on the profession of the candidate's *own* faith only, or on that of *another's* faith.† And if the Baptists require a *per-*

\* From the *Martyrology* of the foreign Anabaptists, which is a large book in folio, it would appear, that the members of this denomination have been exposed to still heavier sufferings in other countries than in England.

† See *Letters addressed to Bishop Hoadley*, by the late Mr. Foot, a General Baptist at Bristol.

sonal profession of faith from all their members, so does the Church of England from all hers, yet not with them, *previous* to Baptism, but *subsequent* to it, in Confirmation, when she calls upon them, to renew, ratify, and confirm the vows of their baptism, after which they may be admitted to every Christian privilege.\*

The three denominations of *Protestant Dissenters* now considered, being excluded from the English Universities by the subscription to the thirty-nine articles required at matriculation, have seminaries of their own, where young men are educated for the ministry.

Among the *Presbyterians* are to be reckoned the academies “at *Manchester*†, and *Caermarthen* in South Wales; besides six exhibitions granted by Dr. Daniel Williams to English Presbyterian students to be educated at *Glasgow*.” But though Dr. W. left these exhibitions for *Presbyterians*, the liberality of that body has invited *Independent* students to enjoy them, and would not, it is supposed, exclude Baptists. They are, however, very inadequate, being only about 25*l.* each.

Among the *Independents*, may be mentioned the academies at *Wymondley-house*, near Hitchin, in Hertfordshire,—*Rotherham*, in Yorkshire,—*Homerton*, and *Hoxton*. They have ‘also one at

\* For part of the above account of the *Baptists*, the author is indebted to two respectable Baptist ministers.

† Mr. Evans, but others place it at, or near, *York*.

*Wrexham*, in Denbighshire, Wales,—one, I believe, on a smaller scale, at *Axminster*, Devonshire,—and one at *Gosport*, Hants. A part of the students at Gosport are intended for foreign missions.

The *Baptists* have an academy at *Bristol*, generally known by the name of the *Bristol Education Society*, “over which the late Dr. Caleb Evans, and his venerable father, the Rev. Hugh Evans, A. M. presided many years with respectability.”

A similar Institution, though upon a smaller scale, has been formed among the *General Baptists*, which, Mr. Evans tells us, “has met with considerable encouragement.”

The *Particular Baptists* have also very lately formed another institution of the same kind at *Bradford*, Yorkshire, which is called the *Northern Education Society*; and they have long enjoyed two exhibitions for students, to be educated for *four* years at one of the Universities in Scotland, given them by Dr. Ward, of Gresham College, the author of the *Lives of the Gresham Professors, the System of Oratory*, &c.

In Dr. Kippis’s *Life of Dr. Doddridge*, prefixed to the 7th edition of his *Family Expositor*, will be found an account of the general mode of education for ministers among the Dissenters.—Dr. Doddridge was himself for some time at the head of the *Wymondley Academy*, and afterwards superintended an Independent seminary at Northampton.

Mr. Palmer, in his *Non-conformist's Memorial*, speaking of Dr. Daniel Williams, mentioned above, says,—“ He gave the bulk of his estate to charitable uses, as excellent in their nature as various in their kinds, and as much calculated for the glory of God, and the good of mankind, as any that have ever been known. He left his library for public use, and ordered a convenient place to be purchased or erected, in which the books might be properly disposed of, and left an annuity for a librarian. A commodious house was accordingly erected in *Redcross-street, Cripplegate*; where his collection of books is not only properly preserved, but has been gradually receiving large additions. This is also the place in which the body of dissenting ministers meet to transact their business, and is a kind of repository for paintings of Non-conformist ministers, for MSS., and other matters of curiosity and utility.” The building itself belongs to the *Presbyterians*, “ but it is by the trustees handsomely devoted,” says Mr. Evans, “ to the use of the Dissenters in general.”\*

Although it is part of the religious establishment, confirmed by the treaty of Union in 1707, that the most important civil offices in England are open only to those who give legal evidence of their being members of the Established Church; yet Protestant Dissenters are exempted by the *Toleration Act* from all penalties, civil or eccle-

\* *Sketch*, p. 153, (edit. 1807,) to which the reader is referred.

siastical, for their non-conformity to the Church of England: and, instead of that subscription to the (doctrinal) articles of the Church, which that act prescribed to dissenting ministers, they are now (by 19th of George III.) only required to declare, that they receive the Scriptures as the rule of their doctrine and practice. Blasphemy, an open denial of the Trinity, and reviling the Christian faith, are crimes that are still punishable by the magistrate, as hurtful to the essential interests of society; and he is ready to chastise any such attack upon the established religion as tends to disturb the public peace. But the religious opinions of those who live inoffensively, are not enquired into;—the law, both in England and Scotland, takes under its protection all places where Dissenters of any description assemble for worship; and a penalty of 20*l.* is incurred by disturbing them in the exercise of public worship.

Some obsolete penalties and disabilities still remain, by laws which, according to some, it is better to neglect than to repeal.\* A small fine, imposing attendance on some kind or mode of public worship, might probably be justified, with reserve of freedom of conscience, and without enjoining absolute conformity to any particular service and rites.

\* See the arguments on Lord Stanhope's Bill proposed in 1789.—See also the Articles of Union, 5 Ann, c. 8.





## METHODISTS.

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NAME.—The body of Christians to which this name is chiefly and properly applied, are the followers of the late Rev. John Wesley, who was the founder of this numerous and daily increasing society. The name was first given to Messrs John and Charles Wesley, and some serious young students, who associated with them, by a student of Merton College, Oxford, on account of the regularity which they maintained in their lives, and pursued in their studies; in allusion to a certain college of physicians, who flourished at Rome about the time of Nero; and were remarkable for putting their patients under regimen, and practising medicine by *method*; for which reasons they were termed *Methodists*.

But there are other religious bodies to which the term is applied.—

It is given to the followers of Mr. Whitfield,—to the English Independents, patronised by the late

pious Countess of Huntingdon,—also to many of the clergy and lay members of the Church of England; and, in short, to every person of any denomination, who manifests a more than ordinary degree of personal religion, and of concern for the salvation of mankind. There is, however, only *one* body to which the name properly belongs; for only one denomination take it to themselves; and thus convert what was originally given to them, as a term of reproach, into a distinguishing appellation. These are the followers of the late John Wesley, who hold the opinions which he taught, and maintain the discipline which he left at his death; and accordingly the term is affixed by them to a periodical work, which they publish monthly, called the *Methodist Magazine*.

RISE AND FOUNDERS.—The Methodist Society was first founded at Oxford in 1729. Mr. John Wesley, then a fellow of Lincoln College, Mr. Charles Wesley, student of Christ's Church, Mr. Richard Morgan, commoner of Christ's Church, and Mr. Kirkman, of Merton College, set apart some evenings in the week for reading the Greek Testament, conversation, and prayer. The next year, two or three of Mr. John Wesley's pupils, and one of Mr. Charles Wesley's, desired the liberty of meeting with them. In 1732, Mr. Benjamin Ingham, of Queen's College, and Mr. Broughton, of Exeter, were added to the number. Soon after they were joined by Mr. Clayton, of Brazen-Nose College, and two or three of his pupils, and

by Mr. James Hervey, pupil to Mr. John Wesley, and, in 1735, by the celebrated Mr. George Whitefield, of Pembroke College, then in his 18th year. This society of Collegians is considered as the first Methodists. They formed rules for the regulation of their *time* and *studies*, for *reading the scriptures*, and *self-examination*. They also received the Lord's Supper *every week*; they visited the prisoners in the Castle, and the sick poor in the town; also instituted a fund for the relief of the poor: and, in order to accomplish this benevolent design, Mr. Wesley abridged himself not only of all superfluities, but of many of the necessaries of life.

About this time infidelity was rapidly gaining ground, and threatened to overwhelm the whole country;\* and there is every reason to believe, that the Methodists were highly instrumental in stemming this mighty torrent; but instead of being applauded, they were censured. What rather entitled them to encouragement, soon exposed them to a species of persecution. But, notwithstanding all the reproaches with which they were loaded, they continued indefatigable, "abounding in the work of the Lord."

In 1735, Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, Mr. Ingham, and Mr. Delamotte, sailed for Georgia, in order to preach the gospel to the Indians. While on their passage, Mr. John Wesley adopted the plan of preaching *extempore*; and from

\* See Advertisement to Butler's *Analogy*.

that time made it his constant practice, while he lived. During the voyage, they still maintained that regularity in the distribution of their time, and that singular seriousness in conversation, which at first procured them the name of *Methodists*; giving full proof that they were duly impressed with a sense of their important undertaking. It appears, however, that they failed in their design of preaching the gospel to the Indians. While Mr. Wesley was employed at Savannah, several circumstances of a disagreeable nature occurred, which induced him to return to England, after an absence of nearly two years, when he was succeeded by Mr. Whitfield, whose unwearied exertions, and astonishing success, are without a parallel in the Western World.

Upon Mr. Wesley's return to England, he was invited to preach in several churches; but the concourse of people, who followed him, being great, and some of his tenets rather strange, the genteel parts of the congregation were annoyed by the crowds, and the clergy took offence at his doctrines, so that the churches in general were soon shut against him. However, his labours were attended with considerable success, several appeared to be religiously impressed, and disposed to meet together for spiritual conversation and prayer. May 1st 1738, Mr. Wesley formed them into a society, in which he was assisted by Peter Bohler, a young Moravian teacher. This was the first regular society formed by Mr. Wesley, though it seems he did not consider it the

origin of Methodism, but referred it to an earlier period. “The *first* rise of Methodism, (so called,)” says he, “was in November 1729, when four of us met together at Oxford; the *second* was at Savannah, in April 1736, when twenty or thirty persons met at my house; the *last* was at London, on this day, (viz. May 1, 1738,) when forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every Wednesday evening, in order to a free conversation, begun and ended with prayer.”\*

It was still his *desire* and *intention* to preach in the established church, as he ever cherished a sincere regard for it; but, for the reasons already assigned, he was not permitted. He therefore preached in Newgate; in some dissenting chapels in London, and in different places in the country, where he could obtain admission. In consequence of lying under this species of proscription, and multitudes crowding from all quarters to hear him, he was at length compelled to take the open air, and commence *field preacher*. This seeming departure from decorum, he justified on several grounds.—“Be pleased to observe,” says he, “1. That I was forbidden as by a general consent, to preach in any church, (though not by any judicial sentence,) *for preaching such doctrine*.—This was the open avowed cause, (except that the people crowded so.) 2. That I had no desire or design to preach in the open air, till long after this prohibi-

\* See Mr. Wesley's *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. iv. p. 175.

tion. 3. That when I did, as it was no matter of choice, so neither of premeditation. There was no scheme at all previously formed, which was to be supported thereby, nor had I any other end in view than this,—to save as many souls as I could. 4. *Field preaching* was therefore a sudden *expedient*; a thing submitted to, rather than chosen, and therefore submitted to; because I thought preaching even *thus*, better than *not* preaching *at all*.”\* This may be considered as the commencement of his *itinerancy*.

It was at this early period of METHODISM, when most of his valuable friends forsook him; among whom was that justly celebrated character before mentioned, the Rev. George Whitfield, who, during this time, had been labouring chiefly in America; where he imbibed certain doctrines, contrary to those taught by Mr. Wesley. Upon his return to England, in 1741, a separation took place; but though they differed in sentiment, they lived and died united in heart.†

#### PROGRESS AND PRESENT STATE OF METHODISM.

I. In *England*.—Mr. Wesley, finding his societies increasing very fast in London, Bristol,

\* See Mr. Wesley's *Life*, by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, p. 182.

† See Roberts's *Life of Mr. Whitfield*, p. 256; also, Benson's *Apology for the Methodists*, p. 138.

and other places, and having, in vain, solicited assistance from some of the established clergy, was induced to select from his followers those whom he judged the best qualified to instruct the rest. This was the origin of his *lay preachers*. It seems at first he was exceedingly averse from employing them; but being unable to give due attention to all his societies, and at the same time to extend his sphere of action, necessity compelled him to call in their aid. It would appear, however, that he soon became reconciled to it, on account of the success which attended their labours. Having now assistants, pious, zealous, and active, he sent them forth in every direction; some to watch over the societies already formed, and others to the highways, &c. to preach to the most dissolute and abandoned; to insist upon repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ; to offer a free, full, and present salvation to all, the most atrocious not excepted. Their labours were eminently useful in every part of the kingdom, and numerous societies were formed. Even the colliers of Kingswood, and the miners of Cornwall, who were ignorant, ferocious, and wicked, to a proverb, listened to the animated and heart-searching discourses of these itinerants, by whom some thousands of them have been reclaimed from their vicious courses. They did not, however, labour without molestation; for as it was in the days of the apostles, so it was now; they were every where spoken against, and in many places persecuted with unrelenting cruel

ty. Frequently they were beset by mobs, and assailed by showers of stones, and sometimes inhumanly dragged through the streets, until their mangled bodies were bereft of every symptom of life. It must be confessed, however, that the imprudence of some of the members contributed much to the reproach they met with. In London, in 1762, one George Bell, and some others, through their ignorance of the operations of the human mind, were led to conceive, that every idea which arose in the mind, was the immediate inspiration of the spirit of God. They accordingly asserted, that the world would be destroyed on the 28th of February 1762. Mr. Wesley withstood them both in public and private; in consequence of which a separation took place. Yet these, though the wildest enthusiasts, bear the name of *Methodists*; and, by their conduct, bring a reproach on those with whom they have no connexion. However, Methodism, rising above the imprudence of its friends, and the opposition of its foes, has overspread the country so much, that in England alone, at this day, there are 125,133 members, and about 500 itinerant preachers.

II. In *Ireland*. In 1747, Mr. Williams, a preacher in the Methodist connexion, went to Dublin, and soon formed a small society. Mr. Wesley, being apprised of his success, immediately embarked for Ireland. After preaching in different parts of the kingdom, with his usual success, he returned to England, leaving a Mr. Trem-



bath to assist Mr. Williams. In 1748, Mr. Wesley again crossed the Channel for Ireland, taking along with him some zealous active itinerants, to secure and carry on the work in that part of the British empire. Several circuits were soon formed, and meeting-houses were built in every part of the country. There, also, they suffered the most violent persecution, particularly at *Cork*. But, surmounting the whole, they succeeded in carrying the gospel into the interior of the country. They were soon able to address the native in their own tongue; by which means many hundreds of poor creatures, most deplorably ignorant, have been savingly enlightened by their labours. The societies have continued to increase so much, that, at the present, there are in that kingdom about 25,000 members, and upwards of 100 itinerants.

III. In *Scotland*. In 1751, Mr. Wesley accompanied by Mr. Hopper, visited Scotland. At Musselburgh, they were very kindly received by many respectable persons of that place. After preaching a few times to numerous and attentive congregations, he departed, leaving Mr. Hopper behind him. In 1753, he entered Scotland again, by the way of Dumfries; and was very respectfully treated at Glasgow, by the reverend and truly pious Dr. Gillies. After preaching in his church, he went to Edinburgh, and from thence through Dunbar to England. A few years after he visited North Britain again, and preached in the open air,

wherever he came. At this period, he had a prospect of many followers; but his hopes were blasted through the republication of one of Mr. James Hervey's pamphlets, by a respectable minister of the church of Scotland, (the late Dr. Erskine,) with a preface, in which he bitterly inveighed against Mr. Wesley's Arminian, which he considered unsound, principles. Societies, however, have been formed in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness, Dumfries, and other places. But the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists being so contrary to the education and genius of the North Britons, their success has not been considerable. There are not more than 15 itinerants, and 2000 members and communicants, though their regular hearers are more than double that number.

IV. *Isle of Man.* In 1775, Mr. Crook visited this island, and preached in several parts of it. He formed a considerable society at Castletown, and the island was joined to the Whitehaven circuit. Here, also, opposition reared its malicious front to arrest their progress. The bishop prohibited all rectors, vicars, curates, &c. from administering the sacrament to the Methodist preachers, or to any of their hearers. At present, the island is divided into two circuits. There are four itinerants in it, and 2450 members, about 60 of whom are local preachers, who preach to the country people in the Manx tongue.—For particulars, see *Life of Mr. Crook, Methodist Magazine for 1808.*

V. *Islands of Jersey, Guernsey, and Alderney.*

The island of *Jersey* was visited by Robert Carr Brackenbury, Esq. a local preacher in 1785; and in 1786, by Mr. (now Dr.) Adam Clark, an itinerant, a man of extensive learning, unaffected piety, and ardent zeal. From thence Mr. Brackenbury visited *Guernsey*; and in 1787, Mr. Clark went to *Alderney*. In *Jersey*, they met, as usual, with considerable opposition. Mr. Clark was at one time pulled down from the pulpit, and drummed out of town; yet he persisted in his visits and labours, until he established regular worship there, when even the very mob revered him. There are in these islands 925 members, and 8 preachers.

VI. *America.* During the space of about 30 years, viz. from 1760 to 1790, several persons, members of Mr. Wesley's society, emigrated from England and Ireland, and settled in various parts of America. Among these were two local preachers from Ireland, who began to preach the gospel, the one at *New York*, and the other in *Frederick county*, in *Maryland*. About this time also, a Mr. Webb, a lieutenant in the army, preached at *New York*, and, with the assistance of his friends, erected a chapel there, which was the first belonging to the Methodist connexion in America. Induced by the success he met with, and by an earnest desire of saving souls, he wrote to Mr. Wesley, importuning him to send missionaries to that continent. Accordingly, Mr. Wesley nominated Mr. Richard Boardman, and Mr. Joseph Pilmoor, as missionaries for America. They landed at *Philadelphia* in

1769, and were the first itinerant preachers in connexion with Mr. Wesley on that continent. The work continuing to spread, others were sent, at different times, to carry it on. During the war between America and this country, all communication between the two societies was cut off. This was very much felt by the American Methodists, who, it appears, were destitute of the sacraments, except in two or three cities. This induced a considerable number of the preachers to importune Mr. Asbury, the senior minister, to take proper measures, that the societies might enjoy the privileges of all other churches. Mr. Asbury's attachment to the Church of England was, at that time, exceeding strong; he therefore refused them redress. On this, a majority of the preachers separated from him, and chose out of themselves, three senior brethren, who ordained others, by the imposition of hands. Mr. Asbury, however, prevailed upon them to return, and, by a vote of one of the conferences, the ordination was declared invalid, and a reunion took place.

When peace was restored between Great Britain and the States, the intercourse was opened between the societies in both countries. Mr. Asbury then gave Mr. Wesley an account of the work during the war, also the uneasiness of the people's minds for want of the sacraments. This induced Mr. Wesley to draw up a plan of church government; and, with the assistance of Dr. Coke and the Rev. Mr. Creighton, he ordained Mr. Richard Whatcoat, and Mr. Thomas Vasey, pres-

byters, and afterwards ordained Dr. Coke, a *joint superintendant*, with Mr. Asbury, over the brethren in *North America*. At the same time, addressing a circular letter to all the Methodist societies in America, explanatory of his conduct.\*

The Lord continued to smile upon their labours; and, not many years ago, poured out his Spirit upon them, and some other religious denominations, in a most remarkable manner; so that many thousands were added to the church; and to this day, they are rapidly increasing. There are, in the United States, upwards of 150,000 members, and perhaps not less than 500 itinerant preachers.

VII. *West India Islands*.—In 1760, Mr. Nathaniel Gilbert, a gentleman of considerable respectability in the Island of Antigua, and speaker of the House of Assembly, having heard the gospel in England, began a meeting, of a few people, in his own house, on the Lord's day, for exhortation and prayer. He continued his labours in the

\* This procedure has been considered by some as extremely irregular. It is but fair, however, to state, that the circumstances which called for it, were peculiar and urgent; and that Mr. Wesley believed bishops and presbyters "*were of the same order*," and that consequently he had a right to act as he did. But it is plain, that notwithstanding his attachment to the Church of England, in this instance he departed from that order, which, *as an Episcopalian*, he was bound to maintain.

See Mr. Wesley's *Life by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore*, page 459.

midst of great reproach, until he formed a society of two hundred negroes; all of whom were convinced of sin, and many of them truly converted to God. At his death, they were as sheep without a shepherd. Some time after, Mr. John Baxter, a ship-wright of the royal dock at Chatham, and a local preacher, in connexion with Mr. Wesley, went to Antigua, to work for his Majesty in English harbour. He collected the scattered remains of Mr. Gilbert's labours; and, by devoting his leisure hours to the instruction of the negroes, in a few years formed a society of upwards of a thousand members. In 1787, Dr. Coke, and three missionaries, sailed for Nova-Scotia; but, by stress of weather, they were obliged to bear off for the West Indies. They reached Antigua, and landed there on the 25th of December; and were received by Mr. Baxter, and his society, with open arms. They joyfully availed themselves of the door which Providence seemed to have opened for them, and resolved to turn their attention to the poor unenlightened enslaved Africans. From thence they visited St. Vincents, St. Christophers, and St. Eustatius. In 1788, several more were sent to extend the mission to all the western isles. They landed at Barbadoes, whence they visited Nevis and Tortola. In 1789, they went to Jamaica, Grenada, and St. Domingo. At present they have societies in nearly all the islands, amounting to about 14,000 members, and 20 missionaries.

They have also a society of blacks and mulattoes in Sierra Leone, on the coast of Africa; and another at Gibraltar, consisting chiefly of soldiers.

It appears from the minutes of their sixty-fifth annual conference, held at Bristol in July 1808, that, at that conference, 64 young men were admitted to preach as probationers; 33 probationers were admitted into full connexion; 129 chapels were building, or to be built the ensuing year; and that the societies in Great Britain had increased in number upwards of 8000 during the preceding year.

The following is a statement of the number in society, in July 1808, extracted from the same minutes:—

Total in the United States of America,	151,590
Total in Europe, - - -	151,145
Total in the West India islands -	13,806
Total Nova-Scotia, New Brunswick, } and Newfoundland, - }	990
<hr/>	
Total in Europe and America,	317,531
<hr/>	

If we add to the above an equal number of regular hearers, (and they reckon upon this at least) who are not joined in society, it will appear that there are upwards of 600,000 persons connected with the methodists at the present day.

For farther particulars, see *Life of Mr. Wesley*, by Dr. Whitehead, and another by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore; Benson's *Apology for the Methodists*; Myles's *Chronological History of the Methodists*; Mr. Wesley's *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 4.; and Mr. Wesley's and Dr. Coke's *Journals*.

DOCTRINES.—Mr. Wesley ever professed an undeviating attachment to the liturgy, articles, and homilies, of the Church of England, and appealed to them, as well as to the scriptures, when supporting the doctrines which he taught. And though the greater part of his followers have separated from the established church, yet they profess still to hold and inculcate her doctrines, as stated in her liturgy, articles, and homilies. But as this is disputed, and as some of their tenets have occasioned much controversy in the religious world for more than half a century, it may not be improper to state a few of them here.

1. They hold the doctrine of *Original Sin*.—Maintaining the total fall of man in Adam, and his utter inability to recover himself, or take one step towards his recovery, “without the grace of God preventing him, that he may have a good will, and working with him, when he has that good will.” See Mr. Wesley’s *Sermons on Original Sin, and Salvation by Faith*; and his treatise on *Original Sin*, in answer to Dr. Taylor of Norwich.\*

\* If Arminius, as some have affirmed, “denied that man’s nature is totally corrupt, and asserted, that he hath still a freedom of will to turn to God, but not without the assistance of grace,” Mr. Wesley was not an Arminian, for he strongly asserted the *total* fall of man; and constantly maintained, that by nature, man’s will is only free to evil, and that divine grace must first prevent, and then continually further him, to make him willing and able to turn to God.”—See the Rev. John Fletcher’s *First Check to Antinomianism*, first edition, page 17.

☞ On this head, I presume, there was little or no difference of opinion between Mr. Whitfield and Mr.



2. *General Redemption*.—Asserting “that Christ, by the *grace* of God, tasted death for every man.” And this *grace* they call *free*, as extending itself *freely* to all. That “Christ is the saviour of *all* men, especially of them that believe;” and that consequently they are authorised to offer salvation to all, and *preach the gospel to every creature*.”—See Mr. Wesley’s *Predestination Calmly Considered*, and his *Sermons*.

3. *Justification by Faith*.—“Justification,” says Mr. Wesley, “sometimes means our acquittal at the last day; Matt. xii. 37. But this is altogether out of the present question; for that justification whereof our articles and homilies speak, signifies present forgiveness, pardon of sins, and consequently acceptance with God, who, therein (Rom. iii. 25.) *declares his righteousness*, or justice and mercy, by or *for the remission of the sins that are past*; saying, *I will be merciful to thy unrighteousness; and thine iniquities, I will remember no more*. I believe the condition of this is faith; Rom. iv. 5. &c. I mean, not only, that without faith we cannot be justified; but also, that as soon as any has true faith, in that moment he is justified. Faith, in general, is a divine, supernatural evidence, or conviction, of things not seen, not discoverable

Wesley; nor is this the only controverted point respecting which the Calvinists and Arminians would be found to speak the same language, if their mutual prejudices would allow them to understand each other. See above vol. ii. p. 256.

by our bodily senses, as being either past, future, or spiritual. Justifying faith implies, not only a divine evidence, or conviction, that God was in Christ, *reconciling the World unto himself*, but a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for my sins; that he loved me, and gave himself for me. And the moment a penitent sinner believes this, God pardons and absolves him.”\*

This faith, Mr. Wesley affirms, “*is the gift of God*. No man is able to work it in himself. It is a work of Omnipotence. It requires no less power thus to quicken a dead soul, than to raise a body that lies in the grave. It is a new creation, and none can create a soul anew, but he who at first created the heavens and the earth. It is the *free gift of God*, which he bestows not on those who are *worthy* of his favour, not on such as are *previously holy*, and so *fit* to be crowned with all the blessings of his goodness, but on the ungodly and unholy: on those who, till that hour, were *fit* only for everlasting destruction; those in whom was no good thing, and whose only plea was, *God be merciful to me a sinner*. No merit, no goodness, in man, precedes the forgiving love of God. His pardoning mercy supposes nothing in us but a sense of mere sin and misery; and to all who see, and feel, and own, their wants, and their utter inability to remove them, God freely gives

\* Mr. Wesley's *Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, part I. page 53.

faith, for the sake of him *in whom he is always well pleased.*"\*

" Good works follow this faith, Luke vi. 43. but cannot go before it; much less can sanctification, which implies, a continued course of good works, springing from holiness of heart. But it is allowed, that entire sanctification goes before our justification, at the last day, Heb. xii. 14. It is allowed also, that repentance, (Mark i. 15.) and fruits meet for repentance, (Matt. iii. 8.) go before faith. Repentance absolutely must go before faith; fruits meet for it, if there be opportunity."†

Mr. Wesley maintained also *salvation in general* by faith. " By salvation I mean," says he, " not barely, according to the vulgar notion, deliverance from hell, or going to heaven, but a present deliverance from sin; a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth. This implies all holy and heavenly tempers, and, by consequence, all holiness of conversation. Now, if by salvation we mean a present salvation from sin, we cannot say; holiness is the condition of it; for it is the thing itself. Salvation, in this sense, and holiness, are synonymous terms. We must therefore say, ' we

\* Mr. Wesley's *Earnest Appeal*, &c. page 6.

† Mr. Wesley's *Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, part I. page 54.

are saved by faith.’ Faith is the condition of this salvation; for without faith, we cannot be thus saved.”\*

But though the Methodists renounce all works from having any part in a sinner’s justification, yet they maintain, that good works uniformly flow from it; and their *zeal* for good works, as the fruits of faith, has led many to denominate them *Legalists*.

4. *The Witness of the Spirit*.—The definition which Mr. Wesley gives of this, is as follows: “The testimony of the spirit is an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my spirit, that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me; that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God.”† The *manner* how the divine testimony is manifested to the heart, I do not take upon me to explain. “Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me, I cannot attain to it. The wind bloweth, and I hear the sound thereof; but I cannot tell how it cometh, or whither it goeth. As no man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man that is in him; so the *manner* of the things of God knoweth no man, save the spirit of God. But the fact we know, namely, that the Spirit of God does give a believer such a testimony of his adoption, that while it is present to the soul, he can no more doubt the reality of his sonship, than

\* Mr. Wesley’s *Farther Appeal*, part I. page 54.

† Mr. Wesley’s *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 141.

he can doubt the shining of the sun, while he stands in the full blaze of his beams.”\*—He also declares his sentiments on this point, in a quotation from Bishop Pearson: “It is the office of the Holy Ghost,” says that prelate, “to assure us of the adoption of sons, to create in us a sense of the paternal love of God towards us, to give us an earnest of our everlasting inheritance. “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us, Rom. v. 5. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. And because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father; the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”† Rom. viii. 14, 16.

5. *Christian Perfection.*—The Methodists maintain, that, by virtue of the blood of Jesus Christ, and the operations of the Holy Spirit, it is their privilege to arrive at that maturity in grace, and participation of the divine nature, which excludes sin from the heart, and fills it with perfect love to God and man. This they denominate *Christian perfection*.

As the subject will be best stated in their own words, I shall lay before the reader a few extracts

\* Mr. Wesley's *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 146.

† Mr. Wesley's *Farther Appeal*, part I. p. 116.

from the minutes of their conferences,\* and the writings of Messrs. Wesley and Fletcher.

“ Q. What is implied in being a *perfect Christian* ?

“ A. The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our mind, and soul, and strength ; Deut. vi. 5. ; xxx. 6. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. 29.

“ Q. Does this imply that all inward sin is taken away ?

“ A. Without doubt ; or how could he be said to be saved *from all his uncleannesses* ?

“ Q. Is there any clear scripture *promise* of this, that God will save us from *all sin* ?

“ A. There is ; Psalm cxxx. 8. *He shall redeem Israel from ALL his iniquities.* This is more largely expressed in the prophecy of Ezekiel ; *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, &c.* Ezek. xxxvi. 25. 29. No promise can be more clear. And to this the Apostle plainly refers in that exhortation ; *Having these promises, &c.* 2 Cor. vi. 1. Equally clear and express is that ancient promise, *The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, &c.* Deut. xxx. 6.

\* Mr. Wesley used to hold an annual conference with his preachers, and presided at forty-seven of them. The subjects of their deliberations were proposed in the form of questions, which were amply discussed ; and the questions, with the answers agreed upon, were afterwards printed under the title of *Minutes of several Conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and others, commonly called, Minutes of Conference.*

“ Q. But does any *assertion* answerable to this occur in the New Testament?

“ A. There does, and that laid down in the plainest terms: 1 John iii. 8. *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, &c.; the works of the devil; without any limitation, or restriction; but all sin is the work of the devil; parallel to which is that assertion of St. Paul, Eph. v. 25. 27. Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, &c.* And to the same effect is his assertion in Rom. viii. 3, 4. *God sent his Son—that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, &c.*

“ Q. Does the New Testament afford any farther ground for expecting to be saved from all sin?

“ A. Undoubtedly it does; both in those prayers and commands which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

“ Q. What prayers do you mean?

“ A. Prayers for entire sanctification; which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God; such, in particular, are,

“ 1. *Deliver us from evil; now when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining.* 2. John xvii. 20. 23. *Neither pray I for these alone, &c.* 3. Eph. iii. 14, 16, 19. *I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* 4. 1 Thes. v. 23. *The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God, &c.*

“ Q. What commands are there to the same effect?

“ A. 1. Matt. v. 48. *Be ye perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.* 2. Matt. xxii. 37. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.* But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin there.

“ Q. But how does it appear that this is to be done before the article of death?

“ A. First, from the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead, but to the living. Therefore, *Thou shalt love God with all thy heart,* cannot mean, *Thou shalt do this when thou diest,* but while thou livest.”

“ Secondly, from express texts of Scripture: Titus ii. 11. 14. *The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, &c.* Luke i. 69. 74, 75. *He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, &c. That he would grant unto us that we, &c.*

“ Q. Is there any example in Scripture, of persons who had attained to this?

“ A. Yes. *St. John,* and all those of whom he says in his first Epistle, iv. 17. *Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world.*”\*

The exposition which Mr. Wesley gave of his sentiments being misunderstood, and unguarded language being sometimes used by some of his followers, when speaking on this subject, the

\* See *Life of Mr. Wesley*, by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, Book II. chap. iii.



Methodists have been generally branded with holding “*absolute sinless perfection*.” But whether Mr. Wesley’s sentiments on this point were scriptural or not, it is but doing him justice to say, that he never carried them to this extent. This is evident from his censuring Mr. Maxfield, (who was one of his first lay preachers, and whom he loved as a son,) for pushing the doctrine to this extreme. In a letter to Mr. Maxfield concerning it, he says, “I dislike your supposing man may be as *perfect as an angel*; that he can be *absolutely perfect*; that he can be *infallible*, or *above being tempted*; or that the moment he is pure in heart, he *cannot fall from it*.”\*

Again, “Christian perfection does not imply an exemption from *ignorance or mistake, or infirmities, or temptations*; but it implies the being so crucified with Christ, as to be able to testify, *I live not, but Christ liveth in me*, (Gal. ii. 23.) and *hath purified my heart by faith*, (Acts xv. 9.) It implies *the casting down every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*. And, in a word, it implies, *the being holy, as he that hath called us is holy, in all manner of conversation*,† (1 Peter i. 19.)—Again, Mr. Wesley farther explains himself as follows: “To explain myself a little further on this head: 1. Not only *sin, properly so called*, that is, a *voluntary* transgression of a known

\* See *Life of Mr. Wesley*, by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, Book II chap. iii page 335.

† *Earnest Appeal*, &c. page 24.

law; but *sin*, improperly so called, that is, an *involuntary* transgression of a divine law, known or unknown, needs the atoning blood. 2. I believe there is no such perfection in this life as excludes these *involuntary* transgressions, which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality. 3. Therefore *sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should seem to contradict myself. 4. I believe a person filled with the love of God is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. 5. Such transgressions you may call *sins*, if you please; I do not, for the reasons above-mentioned.”\*

I shall now add a small extract from the Rev. Mr. Fletcher’s works, and then conclude;—

“ We call *Christian perfection*,” says he, “ the maturity of grace and holiness, which established, adult believers attain to, under the *Christian* dispensation: and, by this means, we distinguish that maturity of grace, both from the ripeness of *grace* which belongs to the dispensation of the Jews *below* us, and from the ripeness of *glory* which belongs to departed saints *above* us; hence it appears, that by *Christian perfection*, we mean nothing but the *cluster* and *maturity* of graces which compose the *Christian* character in the church *militant*.”†

\* Mr. Wesley’s *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, p. 60.

† *The Rev. Mr. Fletcher’s Works*, first edition. p. 16.

☞ After all that is here said, or indeed that can be said, in favour of Christian perfection, so called, I suspect that few readers, not of this denomination, will be disposed to

With respect to Mr. Wesley's sentiments on free will, good works, and works done before justification, he refers us to what is said on these subjects in the former part of the 10th, the 12th, and the 13th articles of the Church of England.

The tenets of this body will be found more amply detailed by themselves, in *Messrs. Wesley and Fletcher's Works*, *Benson's Apology for the Methodists*, and *Myles's Chronological History of the Methodists*.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE AND GOVERNMENT.—

When Messrs. John and Charles Wesley began to preach salvation by faith, the most unequivocal signs of the power of their ministry were soon manifest. Several came to them deeply convinced of sin, to solicit further instruction respecting those things which belonged to their peace. The number increasing, Mr. Wesley soon found them too numerous to instruct separately, or visit personally; he therefore requested them to come together every Thursday evening, for the purpose above-mentioned. Thus it appears, that Mr. Wesley, without any previous design, and almost before he was aware of it, found himself at the head of a growing society. He felt the awful responsibility of his situation, and drew up certain regulations, or

lay claim to it; but trust there are many who, after their best exertions in the way of Christian duty, will adopt the publican's prayer, as most suitable to them and their case—“God be merciful to me a sinner.”

*rules*, to preserve the simplicity, and advance the purity of his little flock. By this means, order was maintained; experimental religion was cherished; and a line of separation was drawn between them and the world. These rules, with the addition of others, made at different times since, as circumstances suggested, are still universally observed by his followers, and have, without doubt, contributed largely to their present eminence in the religious world. Each society is divided into smaller companies, called *Classes*. There are from twelve to twenty in each Class; one of whom, generally a person of more experience than the rest, is styled the *Leader*. It is the business of a leader, 1. To see each person in his class once a-week, at least, in order to enquire how their souls prosper; to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require; to receive what they are willing to give to the poor, or toward the support of the gospel. 2. To meet the minister and the stewards of the society once a-week, in order to inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved; to pay to the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding; and to shew their account of what each person has contributed.\*

There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into this society, namely, *A desire to flee from the wrath to come, to*

\* See the *General Rules of the Methodist Society*.

*be saved from their sins.* But in order to continue therein, it is expected that all the members should continue to evidence this desire of salvation. First, *By doing no harm*, by avoiding evil of every kind; such as taking the name of God in vain; profaning the Sabbath; drunkenness; fighting and brawling; brother going to law with brother; dealing in unaccustomed goods; taking unlawful interest; speaking evil of magistrates and ministers; acting unfairly; costly dress; fashionable amusements; borrowing money without a probability of returning it; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them, &c. Secondly, *By doing good*, according to their ability, as they have opportunity to all men; to their bodies, by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison; to their souls, by instructing, reproofing, or exhorting, all they have any intercourse with. By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, employing them in preference to others, and by this means, assisting each other in business; by diligence and frugality in their temporal concerns; by perseverance, and patiently enduring reproach, &c. Thirdly, *By attending on all the ordinances of God*; such as the public worship of God; the ministry of the word, either read or expounded; the Lord's Supper; family and private prayer; searching the scriptures, fasting, &c.

These are the general rules of the society. If any of the members observe them not, or habitually break any of them, they are admonished, and

borne with for a season; but if they repent not, expulsion follows.\*

Each society is managed by its own leaders and steward, and the preacher stationed with it for the time being. The leaders meet together once a week, and the *stewards*, or, as they were called in the primitive church, deacons, receive what money they have collected in their classes, either for the poor, or for the expenses of carrying on the work. They likewise take into consideration such circumstances relating to any of the members in particular, or the society at large, as properly fall under their notice. If any of the members have walked disorderly, it is here that the charges are preferred against them; and, if the offenders are to be proceeded against, that the sentence of expulsion is pronounced. This is termed a *Leader's Meeting*.

A number of these societies united together, make what is called a *Circuit*. A circuit generally includes a large market-town, and the circumjacent villages, to the extent of ten or fifteen miles. To one circuit, two or three, and sometimes four, preachers, are appointed, one of whom is styled the *Superintendent*; † and this is the sphere

\* See the *General Rules*.

† While Mr. Wesley lived, the superintendent was called the Assistant, on account of assisting him. This preacher is not considered a superior: he is not exempted from any part of the work, nor does he derive any temporal advantage from his office, but sees that every thing be done agreeable to the rules of society, and the minutes of conference.

of their labours for at least one, or not more than two years. Once a quarter, the preachers meet all the classes, and speak personally to each member. Those who have walked orderly the preceding quarter then receive a *ticket*. These tickets are somewhat analogous to the *tesseræ* of the ancients, and answer all the purposes of the *commendatory letters* spoken of by the apostle. Their chief use is to prevent imposture. After the visitation of the classes, a meeting is held, consisting of all the preachers, leaders and stewards in the circuit.\* At this meeting, the stewards deliver their collections to a *circuit steward*, and every thing relating to temporal matters is publicly settled. At this meeting the candidates for the ministry are proposed, and the stewards, after officiating a definite period, are changed. It is superior to a leader's meeting, and is called a *Quarterly Meeting*.

A number of these circuits, from five to ten, or less or more, according their extent, form a *District*; the preachers of which meet annually. Every district has a *chairman*, who fixes the time of meeting. These assemblies have authority.

“ 1. To try and suspend preachers who are found immoral, erroneous in doctrine, or deficient in abilities. 2. To decide concerning the building

\* There is another office, namely that of *trustees*; but this being a legal concern, they have no authority to interfere either with the spiritual or temporal concerns of the people. The first belongs to the preachers and leaders; the second to the preachers and stewards.

of chapels. 3. To examine the demands from the circuits respecting the support of the preachers, and of their families. 4. To elect a representative to attend and form a committee, four days before the meeting of the conference, in order to prepare a draught of the stations for the ensuing year." The judgment of this meeting is conclusive until Conference, to which an appeal is allowed in all cases. The circuit stewards are present at this meeting during the settlement of all financial matters, and minutes are taken of all its proceedings, which are read at the ensuing conference. This is called a *District Meeting*.\*

The *Conference*, strictly speaking, consists only of a hundred of the senior travelling preachers, in consequence of a deed of declaration executed by Mr. Wesley, and enrolled in Chancery, which constituted them such. By which means, a legal specification is given to that phrase, *The Conference of the People called Methodists*, and the conference is cognisable by law. But, generally speaking, the conference is composed of the preachers which were elected at the preceding district meetings, to be their representatives; the other superintendents of the circuits; and every preacher who chooses to attend; all of them having an equal right to vote, &c. (except the probationers,) whether they belong to the hundred or

\* See Myles's *Chronological History*. Great Britain is at present divided into 34 districts, and subdivided into 237 circuits. The West India Islands are divided into 5 districts, and subdivided into 14 circuits.



not. At the conference, every preacher's character undergoes the strictest scrutiny; and if any charge be proved against him, he is punished accordingly. The preachers are likewise stationed; the proceedings of the subordinate meetings are reviewed; and the state of the connexion at large is considered. It is their supreme court, over which there is no controul, and from whose decisions there is no appeal.

The Conference is generally held at London, Leeds, Bristol, and Manchester, in rotation, about the latter end of July. The time which it occupies seldom exceeds a fortnight.

ORDINANCES AND WORSHIP.—Scarcely any part of the Methodist economy has been so much ridiculed, and, I may affirm, misrepresented, as some of their peculiar meetings. That these institutions have been abused, and that several hypocritical pretenders to superior piety have observed them, merely to conceal their wickedness, I believe they themselves will not deny; but it would be illiberal to an extreme, to brand their meetings with the opprobrious epithets, which only belong to those that thus pervert them. The most remarkable of these meetings are the following:

*Class Meetings.*—From twelve to about twenty persons form a Class, one of whom, who is generally a person of more experience than the rest, is styled the Leader. When they assemble, which is once a week, the leader gives out a few verses.

of a hymn, which they join in singing. He then makes a short prayer; after which, he converses with each member about Christian experience, giving suitable advice to all; and concludes by singing and prayer.

*Band Meetings.*—These consist of about four or five members, who are nearly of the same age, in nearly similar circumstances, and of the same sex, who meet together once a-week, in order to speak their minds more freely than it would be agreeable to do in a promiscuous assembly of members, such as a class meeting. From the similarity of age, relations, circumstances, and sex, they are supposed to be capable of entering more fully into each other's situation and experience, and by that means, of affording each other more apposite direction, comfort, &c. than they could in a meeting, where they speak in a more general way. The meeting is conducted in nearly the same manner as a class meeting, and they have certain rules to go by.

At stated periods, those who meet in these private bands, meet altogether, forming a public or select band; when, after singing and prayer, any of the members are at liberty to rise and speak their experience. After a few of them have spoken, the meeting, as usual, is concluded by singing and prayer. Thus, say they, we "confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed," James v. 16. But let it be well observed, that there is nothing

in these assemblies like the auricular confession of sin to a priest, in order to obtain absolution from him; but the speaking freely of their state of mind to one another, that they may know how to rejoice with those that rejoice, and weep with those that weep, which they could not do without some acquaintance with each other's condition.

*Watch-nights.*—These meetings are somewhat similar to the *vigils* of the ancients, which they kept on the evenings preceding the grand festivals. They are held once a quarter. On these occasions, three or four of the preachers officiate, and a vast concourse of people attend. The service commences between eight and nine at night. After one of the ministers has preached, the rest pray and exhort, giving out at intervals suitable hymns, which the congregation join in singing, until a few minutes after twelve o'clock, when they conclude. These meetings are peculiarly solemn, especially that one which they hold on New Year's Eve. while others are carousing, and preparing to meet the dawn of another year, more in the character of Bacchanalians than of Christians, the Methodists are engaged in the most fervent and solemn devotions, and thus begin and end the year with God.

*Love-feasts.*—These are also held quarterly. No persons are admitted that cannot produce a ticket to shew that they are members, or a note of admittance from the superintendent. I understand,

however, that any serious person who has never been present at one of these meetings, may be supplied with a note for once, but not oftener, unless they become members. The meeting begins with singing and prayer. Afterwards small pieces of bread, or plain cake, and some water, are distributed, and all present eat and drink together, in token of their Christian love to each other. Then if any persons have any thing particular to say concerning their present Christian experience, or the manner in which they were first brought to the knowledge of the truth, they are permitted; when a few of them have spoken, a collection is made for the poor, and the meeting is concluded by singing and prayer.

This institution has no relation whatever to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. The elements of the Lord's Supper are bread and wine; whereas at the love-feasts, cake and water only are used. The Methodists consider the former to be a positive institution, which they are bound to observe as Christians: they latter, to be merely prudential, which they observe, because they think them scriptural, and edifying. They suppose that it is to this that St. Jude alludes, verse 12, where, speaking of some evil-doers, that associated with the Christians, he says, "These are spots in your feasts of love,"\*

\* Vide Plin. *Ep. ad. Traj.* Lib. 10. Ep. 97. Lard. *Test. Heath.* 2. 9. page 40.

and that it is of this also that the apostle Peter speaks in his 2d Epistle, ii. 13.

They have also frequent meetings for social prayer, at which the lay-members officiate.

In some of the societies, the Lord's Supper is regularly administered, once a month, and in others only once a quarter. In England, it is administered nearly in the same manner as prescribed in the *Common Prayer Book*. In North Britain, after the same manner as in the Church of Scotland.

The mode of performing divine service among the Methodists is very plain and simple. The service commences with singing, an extemporary prayer from the preacher follows, and after a few more verses of an hymn, the sermon is delivered extempore. The congregation then joins in another hymn; and the whole is concluded with an extemporaneous prayer, and a blessing from the minister. In a few places the service of the Church of England is read; and at City Road Chapel, London, an Episcopal minister is employed for that purpose.

The Methodists have generally excelled in church music, yet instruments of music have been used by them very rarely. And it appears, that the Conference have lately thought proper to prohibit them altogether. Their hymns were composed chiefly by Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, the latter of whom possessed very eminent poetical abilities.

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.—The venerable founder of this sect, is universally allowed, I believe, to have been an extraordinary, and highly distinguished character. His excellencies were numerous, and of the first order, so that it is more than propable, that, in whatever period he had made his appearance, he would have shone as a star of the first magnitude. The singular line of conduct which he pursued in his labours, and the unparalleled success which attended the exertion of his uncommon abilities, excited the wonder, the admiration, and the envy of thousands of his contemporaries. His actions were at first imputed to the love of popularity and filthy lucre; but most persons are now satisfied, that he was actuated solely by a disinterested regard for the welfare of his fellow creatures. Whatever may be thought of his peculiar sentiments, no one can deny him the credit of truly apostolic zeal and perseverance in what he conceived to be the way of duty. For upwards of fifty years, he travelled 8000 miles each year, on an average, visiting his numerous societies. For more than sixty years, it was his constant practice to rise at four o'clock in the morning; and nearly the whole of that period to preach every morning at five. He generally preached near twenty times a week, and frequently four times a day. Notwithstanding this, very few have written more voluminously than he; divinity, both controversial and practical, history, philosophy, medicine, politics, poetry, &c. were all, at different times, the subjects on which his pen was employed. Besides this, he

found time for reading, correspondence, visiting the sick, and arranging the matters of his numerous society; but such prodigies of labour and exertion would have been impossible, had it not been for his inflexible temperance, and unexampled economy of time. Yet, to suppose that he had no failing, or that he was free from faults, would be absurd; but after viewing his personal character, his various labours, the greatness of his sufferings, and the extent of his success, with an unprejudiced mind, it is impossible to deny him the character of a singularly great and worthy man. In 1791 he finished his earthly career, in the eighty-eighth year of his age.

While speaking of Methodism, it would be unpardonable to pass over in silence another of its most renowned and able advocates; namely, the late Rev. John Fletcher, vicar of Madely, in Shropshire. When Mr. Wesley was assailed on all sides, by a number of inveterate opponents, who seemed determined to crush him if possible, Mr. Fletcher appeared upon the field of controversy to aid the exertions and vindicate the character of his persecuted friend; and such was the assistance which he afforded him, that, as the reviewers of the day observed, "Mr. Wesley soon retired from the field, and went quietly on in his labours, happy in being succeeded by so able an auxiliary." He wrote a number of tracts, which possess very great merit, and evince that he was

an eminent divine, a skilful disputant, and a sincere follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.\*

The present Methodist preachers, notwithstanding the aspersions with which they are stigmatised by some uncandid writers of the day, are a respectable body of men. It is true, they do not cut a figure in the literary world, and likewise, that most of them have no pretension to a liberal education; yet they are far from being illiterate, and many of them have acquired a competent knowledge of the learned languages, and of science in general. They are men of deep piety, and exemplary conduct. Their labours are unequalled by any other sect; most of them travelling a number of miles every day, and preaching ten or twelve times every week. Their charity embraces the whole human race, but especially those who are of the "household of faith," of *every denomination*. As they are not regularly educated for the ministry, many have formed the most erroneous ideas on the subject, imagining that they are employed with hardly any prior preparation. But it appears "1. That they are received as private members of the society on trial. 2. After a quarter of a year, if they are found deserving, they are admitted as proper members. 3. When their grace and abilities are sufficiently manifest,

\* A new edition of his works was recently published in nine vols. octavo, including his life, by the Rev. Joseph Benson, editor of the *Methodist Magazine*.



they are appointed leaders of classes. 4. If they then discover talents for more important services, they are employed to exhort occasionally in the smaller congregations. 5. If approved in this line of duty, they are allowed to preach. 6. Out of those who are called the *Local Preachers*, are selected the *Itinerant Preachers*. 7. Their characters and conduct are examined annually in the Conference; and if they continue faithful for four years of trial, they are received into full connexion."\*


The Methodists have been charged with departing from their original principles, in becoming a separate body from the Church of England. This is in part true, but the causes of it ought to be understood. That Mr. Wesley never intended to form a separate sect, independent of the Church of England, is very evident, both from the minutes of the conferences at which he presided, and from many of his publications. But what he so much disliked, and by every means in his power resisted, actually began to take place before his death. Many thousands who had joined his society, had never attended any church previous to their conversion, and therefore could not be expected to have a particular attachment to the Church of England. Numbers had likewise been dissenters or the children of dissenters, before they became Methodists; who it may be supposed, had certain objections to the Church of England. And it cannot be dissembled, that many joined Mr. Wesley's societies, on account of the immoral lives and ex-

\* Benson's *Apology*, &c. page 222.

roneous doctrine of several of the clergy of the establishment, by whom they were persecuted, and with whom they could not in conscience remain any longer in communion. When, therefore, persons in these circumstances became members of the Methodist connexion, and in process of time constituted the major part of it; several of them also becoming leaders and preachers; can it be wondered at, that they should be averse from any connexion with a church from which (to say the least) they never derived any advantage? Besides, it should also be considered, that in a number of cases, even those who were attached to the church, were compelled to declare themselves dissenters, in order to obtain licenses, according to the *Toleration Act*, to screen themselves from the penal clauses of the *Conventicle Act*.\*

Such was the state of the connexion, even before Mr. Wesley's death, so that he deemed it prudent, notwithstanding his scruples, to allow service in church hours, and the sacrament to several of his societies. The death of Mr. Wesley, and the continual accession of members, contributed, no doubt, to widen the breach; but the Methodist preachers, as a body, never encouraged it; and the opposition which they gave to it, was one of the first and main causes of the division which took place in the connexion a few years ago.† However, the separation from the church is far from

\* See *Life of Mr. Wesley*, by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, page 497.

†  See the next article below.

being complete, for there are many thousands who still choose to remain in her communion.\*

But notwithstanding their professions of attachment to the Church, the separation of the Methodists from her communion becomes wider and wider every year, and I doubt not will soon be complete. At each succeeding conference for some years back, numerous societies obtained leave to have the sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered by their own preachers. At the conference held at Manchester in 1803, no fewer than 35 societies in different parts of the kingdom, petitioned for that indulgence, and had their request granted.

In consequence, it is supposed, of some irregularities which had taken place in the connexion, a question arose, whether women should be permitted to preach among the Methodists; and upon this question, the following determination was adopted by the same conference, in 1803, being the 60th, viz. "We are of opinion that, in general, they ought not; 1. Because a vast majority of our people are opposed to it; 2. Because their preaching

\* See Benson's *Vindication of the Methodists, in answer to a report from the clergy of a district in the diocese of Lincoln*, p. 7.

☞ The above account of the Wesleyan Methodists, was drawn up and sent me by a respectable preacher of that Connexion, to whom, for his obliging attention and great readiness to communicate all the information in his power, on the subject of this and the following article, I feel much indebted.

does not at all seem necessary, there being a sufficiency of preachers whom God has accredited, to supply all the places in our connexion, with regular preaching. But if any woman among us think she has an extraordinary call from God to speak in public, (and we are sure it must be an *extraordinary* call that can authorise it), we are of opinion she should, in general, address her *own* sex, and those *only*." &c.\*

*An Expostulatory Address to the Members of the Methodist Societies in Ireland*, by Mr. John Walker, of Dublin, which first appeared, I believe, in 1802, is said to have produced no small sensations among the Methodists; and no doubt it contains many things not unworthy of their attention. Among other things connected with the Methodism of the present day, which Mr. W. notices and disapproves, are—their eagerness to add to the numbers of their society, without duly regarding the religious character of those whom they receive into it;—and, their “idolatrous attachment to men, and submission to human authority in matters of religion.” He next animadverts upon several points of doctrine and discipline, as held and practised by them, such as—Justification—Sanctification—Christian Perfection—Class Meetings—Love Feasts, &c.

\* And I am “sure it must be an *extraordinary*” stretch of authority that can authorise the publication of such a decision in the face of—1 Cor. xiv. v. 34—1 Tim. ii. v. 11, 12, and some other texts—See some remarks on it, and the grounds of it, in the *Christian Observer*, for Sept. 1803, p. 571.

An edition of this *Address*, was published at Edinburgh, in 1807, together with a *Series of Letters* subjoined to it, addressed to Alexander Knox, Esq. who had made some remarks on the author's *Expostulatory Address*.—See also Dr. Hales's *Methodism inspected*.\*

In the year 1739, Mr. Wesley instituted a school at *Kingswood*, about three miles from Bristol, for the Colliers' children. This is still continued, and it is supported by the subscriptions of that society; but in 1794, it was wholly set apart for the education of the preachers' children.

The members of this denomination in the United States, where they have superintendents, elders, &c. style themselves, *The United Societies of the Methodist Episcopal Church*.—They profess themselves to be “a company of men having the form, and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love; that they may help each other to work out their salvation.”†

\* An Answer to Mr. W.'s *Address* was also published by Mr. William West, an Itinerant Preacher, entitled, *A Friendly Address to the Members of the Methodist Society in Scotland, occasioned by Mr. Walker's Expostulatory Address*, &c. And Dr. Hales's work, together with the review of it in the *Christian Observer*, was answered by Mr. Benson, in his *Inspector of Methodism Inspected*, and the *Christian Observer Observed*, 8vo. 1803.

† Mr. Fuller's edition of Hannah Adams's *View*, 12mo. p. 458.

The following extract from a circular letter lately sent by Dr. Coke, General Superintendent of all the Methodist missions, to the preachers in that connexion, will be serving the purpose for which that letter was written, and will no doubt afford pleasure to many readers of every denomination. It is dated London, 28th April, 1809, and informs them, "That on Wednesday last, his Majesty in Council was graciously pleased to disavow (or repeal) the dreadful persecuting law, passed in Jamaica, last December twelvemonth. By that law about four or five hundred thousand of the human race were debarred from all means of instruction; among whom were about thirteen or fourteen hundred of our own society. This fresh instance of the liberal and tolerating spirit of our Government should, *if it be possible*, still more attach us to our good King and his Government. For about six months in this year and the last, I have been labouring in this business; and, praised be God, the event has been most happy. Be pleased to inform all your congregations of this blessed interference of our King and his Government, in behalf of our society at large, and of the poor Negroes in the island of Jamaica. The Lords of Council expect that all our hearers, as well as all the members of our society, shall be as soon as possible informed of this affair, that all painful impressions on this subject may be removed from their minds: and they deserve this, and much more at our hands."

The Methodists here, I am told, (and elsewhere I can readily believe) have received this piece of

information with much satisfaction ; and they seem to feel a very grateful sense of his Majesty's condescension and gracious interference in this instance, and to express the warmest attachment to his person and government.

In this case, as it will doubtless be found in every other, religion and sound policy go hand in hand ; and while the British Sovereign and Council continue to pursue the same line of conduct towards those who dissent from the established worship and forms, they will never want their prayers in their behalf, nor yet their purses, nor even their personal services in times of need like the present.\*

\* It may also be remarked here, that, to prevent the enacting of any such law as that of the Jamaica legislature, thus happily repealed, in the same or other islands, his Majesty has graciously issued a general instruction to the West Indian Governors, " requiring and commanding them, that they should not, on any pretence whatever, give their assent to any law passed concerning religion, until they shall have first transmitted the draught of the bill to his Majesty, and shall have received his pleasure respecting it ; unless they take care, in the passing such a law, that a clause be inserted, suspending its execution, until the pleasure of his Majesty shall have been signified upon it."

# METHODIST NEW CONNEXION,\*

OR

## NEW ITINERANCY.

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DATE AND GROUNDS OF THE SEPARATION.—  
Mr. Wesley professed a strong attachment to the Church of England, and exhorted the societies under his care to attend her service, and receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper from the regular clergy. But in the latter part of his life, he thought proper to assume the Episcopal office, so as to consecrate some to the office of Bishops and ordain several priests for America and Scotland ;†

\* The above is the name which stands on the title page of the *Minutes* (of conference, or) of *Conversations between Preachers and Delegates* in this Connexion, held in Hanley, May 1806. But Mr. Myles remarks, that William Thom, Stephen Eversfield, and Alexander Cummin, who first separated from their brethren, and joined Alexander Kilham, made a schism under the name of the *New Itinerancy*.

† Such irregular proceedings in one who had all along professed a warm attachment to the Church of Eng-



but as one or two of these his Bishops have never left England, since their appointment to the office, some think that he intended a regular ordination should take place, when the state of the connexion might render it necessary. During his life, some of the societies petitioned to have preaching in their own chapels in church hours, and the Lord's Supper administered by the travelling preachers. This request, however, he generally refused, and, where it could be conveniently done, sent some of the clergymen who officiated at the New Chapel London, to perform these solemn offices.

The same request was renewed soon after his death by many of the societies, when they had the mortification to find that this question was decided by *lot*, and not by the use of reason and serious discussion; which, together with some other real or imaginary grounds of offence, soon brought on a division and separation.

The grounds of this separation, (which took place in 1797) the *Methodist New Connexion*, declare to be *church government and discipline*, and not doctrines, as affirmed by some of their opposi-

land, could not but require an apology; and this was accordingly made in a pastoral letter transmitted to the American Societies, and addressed "to Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our brethren in North America." Dr. Coke, on the consecration of Mr. Asbury to the office of Bishop, is said to have made another apology, but, in the opinion of Episcopalians, equally lame with the former. See also above, p. 103, note, and Mr. Jones's *Life of Bp. Horne*, 2d edition, p. 157, &c.

nents. They object to the old Methodists, for having formed a hierarchy or priestly corporation; and say, that in so doing, they have robbed the people of those privileges, that, as members of a Christian church, they are entitled to by reason and scripture. The *New Connexion* have, therefore, attempted to establish every part of their church government on popular principles, and profess to have united, as much as possible, the ministers and the people in every department of it. This is quite contrary, say they, to the original government of the Methodists, which, in the most important cases, is confined only to the ministers, as appears by considering their conference or yearly meeting; for of this meeting, no person, who is not a *travelling preacher*, has ever been suffered to enter as a member. And, indeed, this is the point to which the preachers have always stedfastly adhered with the utmost firmness and resolution, and on which the division at present is said entirely to rest.\* They are also upbraided by the members of the *New Connexion*, for having abused the power which they have assumed. The *New Methodists* have formally protested against most of these abuses, which are enumerated in various publications, and particularly in the *Preface to the Life* of the late Mr. Alexander Kilham, who took so active a part in the separation, that he is considered, by many, as the head and founder

\* The Methodist Conference, however, I understand, object to lay delegates "only on account of the impossibility of stationing the preachers properly, if liable to their interference."

of the *New Connexion*; and its members are sometimes called *Kilhamites* from him.\*

Though these are the points on which the division seems principally to have rested, yet there are several other things that have contributed to it. It is frequently easy to foresee, and to calculate the future changes in society, that the lapse of time will produce; and in no instance is this observation better warranted than in this division, which most persons have long expected. The attachment of the old Methodists to the established church, which originated in Mr. Wesley, and was much cherished by him and many of the preachers, and also the dislike to the church, in many others of the preachers and of the societies, were never failing subjects of contention. As all parties are distinguished in their contests by some badge or discriminating circumstance, so here the *receiving* or *not receiving* the Lord's Supper, in the *established church*, was long considered as the criterion of Methodistical zeal or disaffection. Thus, the rupture that had been long foreseen by intelligent persons, and for which the minds of the Methodists had been undesignedly prepared, became inevitable when Mr. Wesley's influence no longer interfered.

\* Mr. Kilham's Life was written by Messrs. *Thom* and *Grundel*, two of the preachers in this connexion; and according to Mr. Myles, some letters received by Mr. K. from different preachers in the old Connexion, prove that he was only the tool of a party, who did not support him as they ought, and that through the whole affair, he was "a sincere, though a mistaken and troublesome man." He died in 1798.

GOVERNMENT, DISCIPLINE, &c.—The *New Methodists* profess to proceed upon liberal, open, and ingenuous principles, in the construction of their plan of church government; and their ultimate decision in all disputed matters, is in their popular annual assembly, chosen, by certain rules, from among the preachers and societies. To them it appears agreeable, both to reason and the customs of the primitive church, that the people should have a voice in the temporal concerns of the societies, should vote in the election of church officers, and should give their suffrages in spiritual concerns. This subject, when discussed in the conference held at Leeds, in 1797, produced a variety of arguments on both sides of the question; and on its being given against them, the dissentients proposed a plan for a New Itinerancy, and formed themselves into a meeting in order to carry it into immediate effect: Mr. William Thom being chosen president, and Mr. Alexander Kilham, secretary. A form of church government, suited to an itinerant ministry, drawn up at the request of the meeting by these two brethren, was soon printed, under the title of “*Outlines of a Constitution proposed for the Examination, Amendment and Acceptance of the Members of the Methodist New Itinerancy,*” which, with a few alterations, was accepted by the conference of preachers and delegates.

The preachers and people are here incorporated in all meetings for business, not by temporary concession, but by the essential principles of their constitution: for the private members choose the

class leaders, the leader's meeting nominates the stewards, and the society confirms or rejects the nomination. The quarterly meetings are composed of the general stewards and representatives chosen by the different societies of the circuits; and the fourth quarterly meeting of the year, appoints the preacher and delegate of every circuit that shall attend the general conference.

Further information respecting their principles and discipline, may be found in a pamphlet, entitled, "*General Rules of the United Societies of Methodists in the New Connexion.*" Their professions are at least plausible and liberal; but as the sect has yet been of but a few years continuance, little can be said of it at present; and it becomes matter of curious conjecture and speculation, how far its leading members, should they become firmly established in power and influence, will act agreeably to their present liberal professions.

NUMBERS, &c.—In the year 1806, the new Methodists had 18 circuits, upwards of 30 preachers, and about 5918 members in their Connexion. The names of the circuits then were,—Newcastle, Alnwick, Leeds, Huddersfield, Halifax, Manchester, Ashton, Hanley, Liverpool, Chester, Wigan, Blackburn, Nottingham, Leicester, Hull, Sheffield, London and Lisburn.\*

\* Mr. Myles's *Chronol. Hist. of the Methodists*. Mr. Evans's *Sketch*, and Mr. Fuller's edit. of H. Adams's *View*.—See also Mr. Nightingale's *Portraiture of Methodism*.

## CALVINISTIC METHODISTS

OF

### MR. WHITFIELD'S CONNEXION.

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ABOUT the year 1741, or soon after Mr. Whitfield's second return from America, which in the course of his life he is said to have visited seven times, he entirely separated from Mr. Wesley and his friends, "because he did not hold the decrees." Here was the first breach which warm men persuaded Mr. Whitfield to make, merely for a difference of opinion. Those indeed who held general redemption, had no desire to separate: but those who believed particular redemption, being determined to have no fellowship with men that "were in such dangerous errors," would not hear of any accommodation. So that, from the difference of the doctrines which each party maintained respecting the decrees of God, and free-will, the body of Methodists, already immense, divided into two separate communions, the *Cal-*

*vinistic* and the *Arminian*; these holding *general*, and those *particular* redemption.

Mr. Whitfield, on being excluded from the pulpits in the establishment, preached both in chapels licensed under the Toleration Act, in places which were unlicensed, in the open air, in Moor-Fields, on Kennington Common, in the pulpits of the Associate Presbytery in Scotland, in those also of the Scottish National Church; and "if the Pope himself," said he, "would lend me his pulpit, I would gladly proclaim in it the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ." He distinctly professed himself a minister at large. "Itinerating," he used to say, "is my delight." As a preacher he was more popular than Mr. Wesley, but not more diligent; every where in Great Britain, in Ireland, and in America, and wherever he went, he was still attended with the same success; and indeed it is impossible to read, without admiration, an account of the efforts made by both, to propagate their tenets in the different parts of the world. Men more laborious than they were will hardly be found since the days of the Apostles. "They repeatedly travelled over a space more than the circumference of the globe: wherever they moved, they were as a flame of fire, and left a train of evangelical light behind them. They were in preaching unwearied, two, three, and sometimes four times a day; and this often in places many miles distant from each other; and notice having been previously given of their coming, thousands awaited and welcomed them, heard them with re-

verence, and received them as angels of God. Thus immense congregations were formed through all parts of the kingdom, especially in the great manufacturing towns, among the tin-mines, and the collieries.”\*

The lives of both were active and laborious in the extreme; but a period was much sooner put to Mr. Whitfield's exertions than to those of Mr. Wesley, for he died in 1770, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, at *Newbury Port*, near Boston, in New England; so that America, which had constantly engaged much of his attention, was destined to close his eyes. An account of his life was drawn up by the late Dr. Gillies of Glasgow.

NUMBERS, TENETS, WORSHIP, CHURCH GOVERNMENT, &c.—The followers of Mr. Whitfield, Dr. Haweis tells us, “are, in the aggregate, a body nearly as numerous”† as those of Mr. Wesley, but not so compact and united. “Their principles being Calvinistic, recommended them especially to the various denominations of dissenters, and to those of the reformed religion in Scotland and abroad. A great number of these joined Mr. Whitfield, as well as multitudes, who left the established Church. These were formed into congregations in divers places, who, though

\* Dr. Haweis's *History of the Church of Christ*, v. iii. p. 235.

† *Impartial History of the Church of Christ*, v. iii. p. 259. But the general opinion, I believe, is, that Mr. Wesley's followers far exceed them in point of numbers.



considering themselves as one body, have not the same union and interchange as the followers of Mr. Wesley. The first and principal of the churches, at Tottenham-Court, observes the Church ceremonies and liturgy, the others use in general free prayer. Yet these consider themselves not as distinct independent churches, but formed under a fœderal connexion: and some of these have no stated pastor, but are supplied by a rotation of ministers. They have an ordination among themselves; and where there is a stationary ministry, they still hold connexion with each other, and come up as invited or called upon to the greater congregations, for a fixed space, according to an appointed routine. All these places of worship are supported, not like Mr. Wesley's, by a general fund; but the expenses of the meeting, and salaries of ministers, are provided by the several congregations, and collected and expended in each by stewards chosen out of the principal people. The great chapels, in London, are managed by trustees, who were first appointed by Mr. Whitfield himself; and on their several demises, have most faithfully and disinterestedly devolved the trust on others; men hitherto above suspicion, and themselves the most liberal supporters of the cause entrusted to their care: and thus so far from diminishing since Mr. Whitfield's death, the numbers who have joined them are vastly increased. These are every day growing more into bodies of real dissenters, and losing the attachment to the Church, which was at first strongly preserved. Yet they continue very different from the Independents, whom they most re-

semble, in a variety of particulars—respecting itinerancy, church government, change of ministers, and mutual and more open communion. These congregations are very numerous, and very seriously attended. No where is the life of godliness more apparently preserved. The lay preachers, however, are comparatively become few, the most having been ordained among themselves; and the body is not governed by a general conference, nor the work supported by a common stock: but each congregation provides for its own expenses. Some chapels around London depend for their supplies of preachers, to be furnished from the great bodies in the metropolis. The richer congregations are always ready to assist the poorer in building or enlarging places of worship, and in helping a recent and weaker society, till they become sufficiently numerous, and able to defray their own expenses.\*\*\*

COUNTRIES WHERE FOUND, &c.—The Calvinistic Methodists, though they consider themselves as a body, are not incorporated so closely as the followers of Mr. Wesley, but are chiefly under the direction or influence of their ministers or patrons, and are dispersed over England, Wales, Ireland,† and America. Mr. Whitfield built and established an orphan house in Georgia, for

\* *Impartial History of the Church of Christ*, v. iii. pp. 259—261.

† The only Methodists, properly so called, to be found in Scotland, are of Mr. Wesley's Connexion.

which he made large collections both in this country and in America. This institution was afterwards converted into a college for the education of young men, designed chiefly for the ministry; but it has lately been burnt down, and the whole of the benefice annexed to it is now in possession of the state. He also built, at his own expense, two extensive buildings in London for public worship, under the name of *Tabernacles*;\* one in Tottenham-court-road, and the other in Moorfields: and both these are perhaps as well attended, to this day, as any other houses of public worship in Britain, or in the world; the numbers that regularly flock to them being almost incredible. This class of Methodists have also, in different parts, a considerable number of preachers, whose congregations, and the societies connected with them, are very extensive.

\* Just after the fire of London in 1666, by which eighty-nine parish churches were burnt down, "some temporary places were erected with boards, where, as well as in their own abodes, the non-conformists preached. They were called *Tabernacles*; a name which has been since familiar among those who worship apart from the establishment." Messrs. Bogue and Bennett's *History*, v. i. p. 101.

CALVINISTIC METHODISTS  
OF  
LADY HUNTINGDON'S CONNEXION.

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MR. WHITFIELD was chaplain to the late Countess Dowager of Huntingdon, a lady of great piety and benevolence, who formed and warmly patronised a distinct connexion, much on his plan, and according to his principles, which subsists to the present day. On her Ladyship's death, which happened in 1791, Lady Anne Erskine, sister, or a near relation of the celebrated counsellor of that name, now Lord Erskine, took her situation, and is said to have been equally attentive to the concerns of this part of the religious community.

Lady H. erected chapels in various parts of the kingdom, and built a college at *Trevecka* in Wales, for the purpose of educating pious young men for the ministry. Her own labours, we are told, were unwearied, her liberality extensive, and her whole deportment humble and pious ;\*

\* For some account of Lady H. see vol. iii. of Dr. Haweis's *History of the Church*.

and in this connexion alone, including the country congregations, in England, Wales, and Ireland, it is said, there are now no less than *one hundred thousand* members.

She “left all her numerous chapels in the hands of devisees; they pursue exactly the same method of procedure as she did. A number of ministers of the established church, and especially from Wales, where she long resided, continue to supply in rotation the larger chapels of her erection; and those who were her students in her college in Wales, or have since been educated at Cheshunt, with others approved and chosen for the work, are dispersed through Great Britain and Ireland. All these ministers serve in *succession*; not depending upon the congregations in which they minister for their support, but on the trustees, under whose direction they move. Every congregation furnishes a stipulated maintenance to the minister during his residence among them, and his travelling expenses: but in no congregation do they remain as stated pastors, but expect a successor, as soon as the time affixed for their stay is completed. Nor can any of the congregations dismiss the person resident, or procure a change, but by application to the trustees, such being the conditions on which they engage to supply them with a succession of ministers. If any minister is peculiarly useful, and request is made that his stay may be prolonged, it is usually complied with; nay, sometimes at the desire of the people he is allowed to settle among them, liable

however to a call of two or three months annually, to be employed in the work at large. And if any minister is not acceptable, or his ministry beneficial, his stay is shortened, and he is removed to another station. Two rules are established and known: (1.) That if any person leaves the connexion, to which he has no tie, but choice, he is admitted into it no more; though the trustees as cordially rejoice in his usefulness in another denomination of Christians, as in their own. (2.) It is also constantly enforced, that if any man departs from the Calvinistic articles of the Church of England, or incurs reproach by any accusation of immorality, he is summoned to exculpate himself before the trustees, and heard with all candour; but if the fact be established, he is dismissed, without any possibility of being ever again admitted to minister in any of their congregations. The bent of these congregations is strongly to the established church. Her liturgy is used in public worship in all the principal chapels. Ministers of the establishment, such is the lenity of the times, serve without interruption. Indeed, all persecution for religious differences is become so opposite to the spirit of the nation, that these things usually pass without censure. Probably the bishops themselves wish not to alienate large bodies of the most active and exemplary Christians farther from the Church, by useless irritation.”\*

\* See Dr. Haweis's *Hist. of the Church of Christ*, vol. iii. p. 261—263.

The property left by Lady Huntingdon for carrying on the work in which she had so warmly engaged, was seized at her death by the Americans of Georgia and Carolina, where it lay; and her assets in England, her chapels excepted, were not found sufficient for her engagements; “yet, however unable to recover her estates, all claims have been discharged; and the chapels, according to her will, maintained with less incumbrances than at her decease.”

“The seminary in Wales ceased at her Ladyship's death, the lease being just expired, and no endowment left, her income dying with her: but a new college on a plan more promising for literature, has been established at *Cheshunt*, in Hertfordshire, near London; and under the superintending care of trustees appointed for that purpose.” The students are not received into this college too young, nor much advanced in life; usually between the age of twenty and thirty; and the term allotted for their studies is three or four years. Their education and maintenance is entirely free; “and at the expiration of the term of their studies, when they have been examined, and judged fit to proceed to the ministry, they are under no restrictions, but may apply for admission into the established church, or any other denomination of Christians. If Christ be but preached, the end of our seminary is answered.”\*

\* See Dr. Haweis's *History of the Church*, volume iii. page 256—7. This author's acknowledged connexion

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS ON THE FOUR CLASSES OF METHODISTS.—Thus, among those that bear the general name of Methodists, there are *four* distinct bodies, each of which has a discipline and regulations peculiar to themselves; and thus have we beheld the Methodists become, from small beginnings, one of the largest sects that are now to be found in the Christian world. They continued, for some time, in the bosom of the church in which they originated; and if some of their doctrines first gave offence to the established clergy, the appointment of lay-preachers was reckoned much worse;\* and their being appointed without any form of ordination whatever, which almost all of them were,† subjected them to contempt and reproach, which their want of learning, and very often of natural abilities, did not contribute to remove. But what-

with the above seminary at Cheshunt, must, doubtless, authenticate what I have now laid before the reader, on the subject of this article; and sanction the use which I have here made of his *Church History*. On this his connexion, I presume not to make any remarks, much less do I take upon me to decide for those who seem to doubt whether the Doctor is more a churchman or a dissenter.

\* The respectable author of *Zeal without Innovation*, speaking of lay-preaching, describes it as “a thing unexampled in every state of Europe, except ours; and in every age, here as well as elsewhere, till the usurpation of Cromwell, when, among other foul births, this *monster* was produced.”

† The Wesleians, if not the other branches of Methodists, do not now use ordination by imposition of hands, even when their itinerant preachers are set apart for their office.



ever we may think of this, and their other peculiarities, if they possess not much knowledge, which however is by no mean universally the case, it is at least certain that they are not deficient in zeal; and without any desire to imitate them in their irregularities, we may yet commend their endeavours for the general good, and ought to look upon it as our duty, and even an honour, to copy some parts of their conduct. By simplicity of language, fervour of address, patience in opposition, unweariness in labour, piety of conduct, and dependence on Almighty God, they certainly have been the means of doing as much or more good, among the lower orders, than any other denomination of Christians whatever; while, at the same time, they have not cost government a single shilling, but have been treated with insult and contempt.—They are charged by Churchmen, and perhaps very justly, with a needless and unwarrantable schism; and even by the regular Protestant Dissenters, they are considered as too regardless of the order and discipline of the New Testament; while both these, in return, are reckoned by them to have left their first love, and to be too much sunk into formality and inactivity. There are, however, many, both Churchmen and Dissenters, who have thought it no discredit to follow the Methodists, in as far as they conceive that they have followed Christ, having entered into their spirit with respect to a zealous, earnest, and affectionate manner of preaching, and having been, in general, of late years, more on the alert, or more alive to their duty

as ministers of Christ. “ And if many of the Methodists, on the other hand, have abated of their eccentricity, and learned of Dissenters to respect sobriety, and the order of God’s house, there is no cause for regret. By their constant intercourse, they have no doubt had, and will continue to have, a very considerable influence on each other. If both lay aside envies, and emulate each other’s excellencies, they may be very useful one to another; and probably, in a few years, will become one body of people.”\*

But as they were not all Israel who were *of* Israel, so they are not all Methodists who have been called by that name. There are many congregations in London, and elsewhere, who, although they are called Methodists, yet are neither in Mr. Wesley’s, Mr. Whitfield’s, Lady Huntingdon’s, nor the New Connexion. Some of these are supplied by a variety of ministers; and others, bordering more upon the congregational plan, have a resident minis-

\* Mr. Fuller’s edition of Hannah Adams’s *View of Religions*, 12mo. p. 210.

The *Protestant Dissenters*, so called, and the *Calvinistic Methodists* may unite, it is likely, sooner or later; and as there is, at this day, but little or no probability of either of those bodies returning into the bosom of the church whence they came out, which would be a still more happy and desirable union, may the period of their union with each other speedily arrive. But, alas! the present day is not a season noted for Christian unanimity, but rather for endless schisms and interminable divisions.

ter.\* And while the name of Methodist (which, like the term *Pietist*, is often applied to religious persons who have no connexion with any of the above parties) has been disgraced by several Antinomians, &c. as William Cudworth and James Rely, after they separated from the society, it has been highly honoured by having been long applied to many clergymen of the Church of England, whose Methodism chiefly consists in their being more zealous and diligent in the duties of their profession, and their living in a state of greater piety and separation from the world, than the generality of their brethren. “The number of these,” says Dr. Haweis, “is of late amazingly increased, where before scarcely a man of this stamp could be found. Some hundreds,” adds

\* An Union Plan is said to have been lately formed among some congregations of this non-descript order, or among those chiefly of the Calvinistic Methodists; such as the Tabernacle, Tottenham-court Chapel, Rev. Rowland Hill’s, and some of the Countess of Huntingdon’s Connexion. It is not, however, intended to interfere with each other’s management, where the business of the Union is not concerned.—These differ from each other; a few using the Church prayers, the rest conducting public worship after the manner of the Dissenters in general; and, according to some, it is because they cannot be induced to adhere, and combine, and labour, that they are not so prosperous as the followers of Mr. Wesley, from whose systematic adjustment they are far removed.

he, “ as rectors or curates in the established church, inculcate the doctrines which are branded with Methodism; and every where, throughout the kingdom, one or more, and sometimes several, are to be found within the compass of a few miles, who approve themselves faithful labourers in the Lord’s vineyard. They naturally associate among themselves, and separate from the corruption which is in the world. Every where they carry the stamp of peculiarity, and are marked by their brethren. Though carefully conforming to established rules, and strictly regular, they are every where objects of reproach, because their conduct cannot but reflect on those who choose not to follow such examples. They pay conscientious attention to the souls of their parishioners; converse with them on spiritual subjects, wherever they visit; encourage prayer and praise in the several families under their care; often meet them for these purposes; and engage them to meet and edify one another. Their exemplary conversation procures them reverence from the poor of the flock, as their faithful rebukes often bring upon them the displeasure of the worldling, the dissipated, and the careless. They join in none of the fashionable amusements of the age, frequent not the theatres, or scenes of dissipation, court no favour of the great, or human respects; their time and services are better employed in the more important labours of

the ministry, preaching the word in season, out of season, and counting their work their best wages.”\*

These men, on account chiefly of their resembling many of the Methodists in piety and zeal, have been confounded with them, and even called by their name. Yet these are the Churchmen who combat the Methodists most effectually, not indeed by abusive language, but by gradually and quietly superseding their labours. And would the great body of their brethren descend into the field, equipped in the same armour; by adding religious zeal to their love of ecclesiastical decorum, piety to their learning, and a practical acquaintance with the influence of the leading truths of the Gospel upon the heart, to the cold orthodoxy and scanty morality with which too many, it is feared, rest satisfied; sooner or later the consequence would be a happy triumph

\* *Impartial Hist. of the Ch. of Christ*, v. iii. p. 265—6. If this be Methodism, as applied to certain clergy of the *United Church*, and I believe that, upon strict enquiry, in this much of its essence will be found to consist, I heartily pray with Moses (Numbers xi. 29), Would God that I, and all the Lord's ministers, both in and out of the Church, were such prophets or *Methodists*, and that the Lord would pour this spirit upon us! or, in Dr. H.'s own words, “May they grow into an host, like the host of God!”

It may perhaps be viewed as an axiom, that, were there more zeal with knowledge and *without innovation* in the Church, there would be less zeal *without knowledge*, and *with innovation out of it*.


over their opponents—the certain decrease, not only of *Methodism* and *Methodists*, but also of *Sectarism* and *Sectarists*, of every description.\*


\* See Mr. Ingram's *Causes of the Increase of Methodism, and Dissention, and of the Popularity of what is called Evangelical Preaching*, &c. p. 39 et passim.

THE  
OLD DISSENTERS, IN SCOTLAND,\*  
UNDER THE  
INSPECTION  
OF  
THE REFORMED PRESBYTERY.

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NAMES.—The old Presbyterian Dissenters of Scotland have assumed, and received this appellation, on account of the part which their forefathers acted at the Revolution 1688-9,† in openly and candidly dissenting from the public deeds of those who acted as the nation's representatives, in both church and state; and because they are

\*  The following account of the *Old Dissenters*, or *Cameronians*, as they are usually called by others, was drawn up, and sent the author, by some respectable ministers of their Presbytery.

†  A memorial of their activity and zeal at the Revolution, still exists in the 26th regiment of foot, which was first raised from their body, and still bears the name of *Cameronians*

of longer standing, as a distinct body, than any other denomination of Presbyterians who have separated from the established church. Various nicknames have frequently been given them by others:—they have been called *Whigs*, a term which, it is well known, hath often been applied to the zealous friends of civil or religious liberty:—*Cameronians*, from the Rev. Richard Cameron, who fell at Airmoss, in Kyle, on the 20th of July 1680, by the sword of his bloody persecutors, while he, and a number of his followers, being suddenly and furiously attacked, were nobly defending their lives and religious liberties:—*Mountain-men*, on account of their adhering to the same cause with those who faithfully preached the gospel on the mountains and moors of Scotland during the persecution, and because that they themselves, in want of better conveniency, have often been obliged, even since the Revolution, to administer ordinances in the open fields, though this is not so much the case now, as it was formerly:—*McMillans*, from the name of the first minister who espoused their cause after the Revolution, and whose immediate descendants, of the second and third generation, are yet ministering among them.

Were the intention of the imposer good, all these nicknames might be considered as very harmless. There is, however, one very forbidding epithet, viz. *Anti-government-people*, which some have bestowed upon them, but which they justly reject with indignation; inasmuch as they firmly



believe, and have repeatedly shewn from the press, that it is totally inapplicable to them. Unless, indeed, it be either from gross ignorance of their avowed principles, or from pure malice, wishing to make them as obnoxious before the world as possible, it is difficult to conceive how this term could ever be applied to the Old Dissenters.

RISE, PROGRESS, &c.—Concerning the rise and progress of the Old Dissenters, it is obvious to observe, that as they hold no new opinions, with respect to either civil or religious matters, but only contend for the very same things which were generally received by all ranks of men in the purest time of our Reformation, between 1638 and 1649, and which was solemnly ratified, by the fundamental laws of both church and state, in the kingdom of Scotland; therefore they cannot justly be considered as sectarists, or as a new upstart society.

Immediately after the said Reformation had arrived at its zenith, public resolutions were formed, for receiving into places of power and trust, especially in the army, even such as were unfriendly to the covenanted cause. Under the baneful influence of these resolutions, both during the usurpation of Oliver Cromwell, from 1651 till 1660, and during the succeeding 28 years of bloody persecution, from the restoration of Charles II. in 1660, till the revolution 1688, there was a gradual and most alarming defection from the Reformation attainments. In this trespass,

all ranks, in general, through the nation, were deeply involved. Nevertheless, even in these days of trouble, rebuke, and blasphemy, there were some faithful witnesses for Christ and his cause. These were valiant for the truth upon the earth:—they stood and asked for the good old way:—they remembered how they had received and heard:—they resisted the prevailing defections, even unto blood, striving against sin. The last ordained minister, who openly espoused their cause, and went out and in before them, previous to the Revolution, was the Rev. James Renwick, who suffered at the Grass-market of Edinburgh, Feb. 17, 1688. After his death, Mr. Alexander Shields, a preacher, who had laboured a considerable time along with Mr. Renwick, in supporting the same testimony, continued to preach among the people who had lately lost their young champion, and beloved pastor. While matters were in this situation, a Mr. Thomas Linning, who had been formerly sent over to Holland, for finishing his education, and receiving ordination, came home to Scotland. He, together with a Mr. William Boyd, who had also lately come from Holland, joined Mr. Shields; and the three together administered gospel ordinances, for a few months longer, among the poor afflicted people above-mentioned. But when the General Assembly met at Edinburgh, in 1689, these three ministers, deserting their former flock, and relinquishing, in some respects at least, their former principles, gave in their accession to the judicatories of the Revolution church. Thus, the

people who wished closely to adhere to the reformation-attainments, were left as sheep without a shepherd.

Having, long before this time, formed themselves into praying societies, they still continued these, and had, at particular times, a general correspondence of all the societies together, in order to ascertain the state of matters through the body at large, and to cultivate a closer acquaintance with one another. In this trying, and rather singular situation, without any change of sentiment, they stedfastly adhered to the very same principles, which were openly espoused, and solemnly ratified by the covenanted Church of Scotland, in the times of her purest reformation, as can be clearly and fully proved from their written deeds and declarations.

Thus they remained for about the space of sixteen years, till, in 1706, the Rev. John M'Millan, formerly minister of Balmaghie, in Galloway, but who, previous to this, had given his declination from the judicatories of the Revolution Church, acceded to them, and espoused their cause. Having received an unanimous call to be their minister, he took the pastoral charge of them, and laboured amongst them for many years after, with much acceptance, as hundreds of respectable characters have attested, both before and since his death. After having laboured long by himself, he and his people at last received the accession of the Rev. Thomas Nairn, who had been in connexion with the secession church, but had dissented from

them, for reasons which were published to the world. Mr. McMillan and he, with some ruling elders, who had been regularly ordained before, and held the same principles, constituted a presbytery, in the name of Christ, the alone head of his church, on the first of August 1743, under the title of the *Reformed Presbytery*. This title it still bears; not that they consider themselves as any better than other men, or as having, in their own persons, arrived at any higher degrees of perfection; such thoughts they never entertained: but purely for this reason, that it is at least their honest intention, faithfully to adhere to the whole of our Reformation-attainments, in both church and state, without knowingly dropping any part of them. On this account, it is presumed, they may justly enough be called the *Reformed*, or Reformation-presbytery; while, in another point of view, they might, with equal propriety, be denominated the *Dissenting Presbytery*.

One Mr. Alexander Marshall, having studied divinity for a competent number of years, and having passed the ordinary pieces of trial before the Reformed Presbytery, with approbation, was by them licensed to preach the gospel, in April 1744. He soon after received a call, was regularly ordained, and took his seat with the other two, as a co-presbyter. After this, the Reformed Presbytery, from time to time, received small accessions to the number of both their ministers and people. Having obtained help of God, they continue to this day, witnessing none other things

than what many thousands, in the once famous Church of Scotland, have witnessed before them.

**DISTINGUISHING TENETS.**—As to the distinguishing tenets of the Old Dissenters, they wish not to hold any sentiments, of which they need to be ashamed. So far are they from being unfriendly, as some have supposed, to civil government amongst men, that they have uniformly and strenuously contended, that it is a precious ordinance, instituted by the great Creator of heaven and earth, and made known in the revelations of his will, for his own glory, the external protection of his church, where the true religion is known and professed, and the good of mankind at large. Nor do they object even to the particular kind of it, adopted in our own country, viz. a mixed monarchy. The great matters, on which their scruples turn, are the terms, or fundamental conditions, on which persons are admitted into places of power and trust in the nation. Could they, in judgment and conscience, approve of these; did they find them agreeable to the plainly revealed will of God, which they consider as the standard of human conduct, in civil, as well as in religious society; and could they once be persuaded in their own minds, that they are consistent with the fundamental laws of the kingdom, in the purest time of that Reformation, to which they wish still to adhere;—instead of differing from the other inhabitants of Britain, about the acknowledgment of the civil powers, they

would find a pleasure in concurring with them. But plainly perceiving that the present terms of advancement to power are of a different description, and especially, seeing that an unwarranted supremacy over the church of Christ is made an essential part of the constitution, and the support of it, in their respective stations, the positively fixed and indispensable conditions upon which persons are admitted to fill the several places of power; the Old Dissenters cannot, in judgment, approve, but find themselves under the disagreeable necessity of openly entering their protest against national backsliding, either in church or state. Doing so, they consider themselves as proceeding on the great and generally admitted principle, that human society is formed by mutual consent, and not by compulsion. If so, the Old Dissenters cannot, consistently, be refused the privilege of openly avowing their satisfaction with the fundamental laws of that great national society, to which, in the person of their worthy ancestors, they heartily gave their consent, and to which they still consent, in their own persons; neither can they be justly blamed, after using the best means of information in their power, for following the dictates of their own mind, in dissenting from the deeds of those, who, at the Revolution, receded from the former laudable attainments, and re-organised the society, on principles entirely different.

Meanwhile, let it be observed, that after pub-

licly entering their dissent from the Revolution settlement of church and state, and candidly assigning their reasons, it ever hath been, and they trust, ever shall be, their study to live peaceably and inoffensively, without giving disturbance either of small or great. Nor do they wish this to be admitted on their bare assertion. Let stubborn facts bear witness. Let their conduct undergo the strictest investigation, for a hundred years back; and it will be found, that in no rebellions, seditions, or public disturbances of any kind, have they ever had a share, or taken any active part. From all such things, they have endeavoured to keep themselves clear. They never entertained the idea of propagating their principles by violence; nor had they ever the remotest thought of injuring either the person or property of any man, high or low, rich or poor, however much he may differ from them in sentiment, with respect to either civil or religious matters. On the contrary, they sincerely wish, by every consistent mean in their power, to promote the peace and happiness of human society, wherever Providence orders their lot.

The Old Dissenters are strenuous advocates for the binding obligation of the national covenant of Scotland, and of the solemn league and covenant of the three kingdoms, Scotland, England, and Ireland. Fully convinced that the holy Scriptures warrant public vowing, or covenanting, unto the Lord; and, consequently, that either the church, as such, a nation at large, or any other organised

body of professing Christians, may, as well as the individual, bind their own souls by solemn covenant, to serve God, and keep his commandments; they justly conclude, that such deeds, when both matter and manner, as in the above transactions was the case, are regulated by the revealed will of God, must be of perpetual obligation; inasmuch as the society, taking burden upon them, for themselves and their posterity, is a permanent society, which never dies; though the individuals composing it, at any given time, soon may.

**CHURCH GOVERNMENT, DOCTRINE, WORSHIP, &c.**—If it should be enquired, what is the mode of church government, the doctrine, the worship, and the discipline, of which the Old Dissenters approve, and to which they adhere? it may be answered, They are strict presbyterians; taking the Holy Scriptures for their infallible standard; and, in subordination to these, adopting the form of Presbyterian church government, agreed upon by the Westminster Assembly.

The form of sound words which Christ himself hath exhibited in the sacred oracles, they always consider as the rule of their doctrine. As a subordinate standard agreeable to this, they adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith, with the Catechisms, Larger and Shorter; which they consider as a well-digested summary of what should be taught in the church. These doctrines are generally distinguished by the names, Evangelical, or Cal-



vinistic. But the Old Dissenters wish to regard things rather than names. Public prayers, with the heart, and with the understanding also, and in a known tongue, but not in written, or in humanly prescribed forms; singing psalms of divine inspiration, and these alone; reading and expounding the Scriptures; preaching and receiving the word; administering and receiving the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper; together with public fasting and thanksgiving, as the circumstances of the church may require; these they consider as the divinely-instituted ordinances of religious worship; in the observation of which, God is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth; while they reject all rites and ceremonies of human invention, without exception. Agreeably to this, they follow, substantially, as a subordinate rule, the Westminster Directory for Public Worship. For regulating their discipline, both as to matter and manner, they wish carefully to attend unto what the Spirit saith to the churches, especially in the New Testament; while, in consistency with this, they take what aid they can find from the ancient books of discipline, of public authority, in the Church of Scotland, together with the acts and decisions of Assembly, in the time of the reformation; and as to the particular mode of proceeding in these matters, they observe much the same forms of process with the other Presbyterian churches of Scotland.

EMINENT MEN, NUMBERS, &c.—As the Old Dissenters mean not that their faith should stand

in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; they have not been accustomed to take any public, or distinguishing notice of their eminent men. They hope that there are amongst them, as well as amongst others, men who have endeavoured honestly to declare the counsel of God, preaching the word, and being instant, in season and out of season, reproofing, rebuking, exhorting, with all long suffering and doctrine.

The Old Dissenters have nothing to boast with regard to the numbers of either their ministers or their people. Viewing themselves as a body of professors, they may justly adopt the language which the Psalmist adopted, in another case, that they are "small and despised."

They have not, as yet, had any ecclesiastic court among them higher than a presbytery. They have, indeed, three of these in their connexion; one in *Scotland*, one in *Ireland*, and another in *North America*. These, and the people under their inspection, have hitherto, on account of their local situation, only considered themselves, and corresponded together, as sister churches, espousing the same testimony, and acting on the same principles. It hath sometimes, indeed, been proposed to divide the Scotch presbytery, and to form a Synod; but, owing to a considerable number of deaths amongst their ministers, and other circumstances, it hath not yet been carried into execution. In *Scotland*, they

have about sixteen congregations, some very small, and some larger, but none of them numerous. Of these eleven have fixed pastors, two of the eleven being collegiate charges, having two ministers each. The rest of the congregations in Scotland are vacant. In Ireland, they have six congregations, who have fixed pastors, and four or five vacant. In America, five who have fixed pastors, and four or five vacant.

Their *Judicial Testimony*, together with the several *defences* thereof; their *Terms of Communion*, accompanied with an explanation and defence; and their different warnings, against prevailing errors and immoralities, are before the public, and may be consulted by those who choose.

☞ See in particular, a more full account of their principles, &c. in a pamphlet published at *Falkirk*, in 1806, "by authority of the Reformed Presbytery in Scotland," and entitled, "*A Short Account of the Old Presbyterian Dissenters, under the inspection of the Reformed Presbyteries of Scotland, Ireland, and North America; comprehending also an Abstract of their Principles, intended as an Introduction to the Perusal of their Judicial Testimony, and other larger Works.*"

# GLASSITES,


OR

## SANDEMANIANS.\*

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NAMES.—The *Glassites* are so denominated in Scotland, from Mr. *John Glas*, their founder, who was a minister of the established Kirk; but they are now more generally known in England by the appellation *Sandemanians*, from Mr. *Robert Sandeman*.

RISE, PROGRESS, &c.—Mr. Glas, about the year 1727, having offended some of his brethren by certain peculiar notions, both of justifying faith, and of the nature of Christ's kingdom, as being *not* of this world, was tabled as an offender before the presbytery of which he was a member, and afterward prosecuted before the provincial

\*  The following Account of the Glassites was drawn up and sent the author of this work, by a respectable elder of the denomination, now deceased.

synod of Angus and Mearns; and having been, in the course of that prosecution, called on by the synod to answer certain queries, in April 1728, he gave such answers as were by his judges deemed inconsistent with the standard of the national religion; *e. g.* Being interrogated, “Is it your opinion, that there is no warrant for a national church under the New Testament?” he answered, “It is my opinion: for I can see no churches instituted by Christ in the New Testament, beside the universal, but *congregational* churches. Neither do I see that a nation can be a church, unless it could be made a congregation, as was the nation of Israel,”\* &c.

Interrogated, “Is it your opinion, that a single congregation of believers, with their pastor, are not under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction and authority of superior church judicatures, nor censurable by them, either as to doctrine, worship, or practice?” He answered, “A congregation, or church of Jesus Christ, with its presbytery, is, in its discipline, subject to no jurisdiction under heaven.”—And being interrogated, “Do you think yourself obliged, in conscience, to teach and publish these your opinions, differing from the received doctrine of this church, unto the people?”—He answered, “I think myself obliged,

\*  It is worthy of remark here that the *New Independents* also, and all classes of *Baptists* in Scotland, as well as several denominations in England, &c. equally, “decidedly, and completely disapprove of the composition and establishment of all national churches without exception.”

in conscience, to declare every truth of Christ, and keep nothing back ; but to speak all the words of this life ; and to teach his people to observe all things whatsoever he commands, so far as I can understand : and that, notwithstanding of others differing from me, and my being exposed to hazard in the declaring of them.”

For these, and other opinions of a similar nature and tendency, the synod *suspended* Mr. Glas from the exercise of his office, in April 1728 ; and, in the same year, he published “ An Explication of that Proposition,” contained in the foregoing answer, “ A congregation, or church of Jesus Christ, with its presbytery, is, in its discipline, subject to no jurisdiction under heaven.”

Mr. Glas having persisted, not only in the exercise of his office as a minister of Christ, notwithstanding the sentence of suspension, but also in the opinions expressed in his answers above referred to, the synod of Angus and Mearns, after a great deal of previous procedure, by a plurality of votes, but not without protests entered by some of their brethren, in October 1728, “ deposed him from the office of the holy ministry ; prohibiting and discharging him to exercise the same, or any part thereof, in all time coming, under the pain of the highest censures of the church.”


From this sentence Mr. Glas appealed to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. In the mean time he continued the exercise of

his ministry; and, from among his numerous followers, (for his popularity was then great, notwithstanding the peculiarity of some of his opinions,) he formed a congregation on his own principles, who, for some time, assembled at *Tealing*, near Dundee, the parish of which he had been originally ordained pastor. But, a few years after, that congregation, with the addition of some other members, assembled in the town of Dundee.

In the year 1729, Glas published a treatise, entitled *The Testimony of the King of Martyrs*, as expressed in the answer of Jesus Christ to Pilate, (John xviii. 36 and 37,) “ My kingdom is not of this world,” &c. In that treatise, Mr. Glas pretty fully illustrated his sentiments on the points of dispute between the synod and him.

His appeal from the sentence of the synod being referred to the Commission of Assembly, that court, after hearing his speech in defence, (which, with the other two treatises above mentioned, was afterwards published under the title of Glas’s *Works*, vol. i. Edinburgh, 1761, and 2d. edit. vol. i. Perth, 1782,) affirmed the sentence of deposition pronounced by the synod, 12th March 1730.

Glas’s being the first schism in the Church of Scotland, after its establishment in consequence of the Revolution, 1688, made a good deal of noise in that part of the kingdom,\* and produced several

\*  It is therefore by mistake that the *Seceders*, &c. stand before the *Glassites*, in p 36, above.—Several established ministers, it appears, thought well of Mr. Glas’s

controversial tracts, as may be seen in his *Works*; the first edition, in 4 vols. 8vo. 1761, and the second at Perth, in 5 vols. 8vo. 1782.

But Glas's separation was soon followed by a *Secession*, much better calculated to attract the attention of greater multitudes, and, consequently, more formidable to the established Church. The leaders of this secession, consisting of six or eight very popular ministers of the Establishment, instead of denying, as Glas had done, any warrant in the Scriptures for the national covenant, maintained its moral obligation on *all* the inhabitants of Scotland. They complained of the relaxation of discipline in the established Church; they inveighed with much acrimony against the laws of patronage; published an act and testimony against the sins of the times, and contended that the people ought to be allowed to elect their own pastors. They however denied the appellation of schismatics; maintained their strict adherence to Presbyterian principles, and lamented the necessity to which they were reduced, of seceding from the church courts of the Establishment; which they did only because they were conducted on principles repugnant to the original constitution of the Scottish national Church.

On account of these principles, they also were deposed by the General Assembly, in 1733 and

doctrines and practices, but few were disposed to embrace them so far as to give up their livings in the Kirk, except Mr. *Byers* of *St. Boswells*, *Teviotdale*, and Mr. *Ferrier* of *Largo*, in *Fife*.



1734. The followers of these seceders soon became so numerous as to alarm many who were friends to the Establishment; and hence it was, that many addresses, petitions, and remonstrances, appeared at different periods in their favour. Hence, also, happened the remarkable circumstance relative to the case of Glas, which has occasioned this glance at the secession, that would have otherwise appeared foreign from the present article.

The deposition of Mr. Glas was, by some, deemed a precedent for deposing the *Messrs. Erskines*, &c. leaders of the secession. It was very obvious, from the principles of the former, not only that his followers never could be numerous, but that such principles never could be admitted in any national church. From him, therefore, the established Church had little or nothing to fear. Consequently, some mitigation, or modification of the censure inflicted on him, while it could not be injurious to the Establishment, might, it was thought, aid the friends of the leaders of the secession, in applying for a repeal or modification of the sentence of deposition against them.

So it was, therefore, that without any application by Glas, or any of his followers, the General Assembly, in May 1739, about nine years after he had been deposed, “ did take off the sentence of deposition passed by the Commission, 12th March 1730, against Mr. John Glas, then minister at Tealing, for Independent principles; and *did restore him to the character and exercise of a minister of*

*the gospel of Christ*; but declaring, *notwithstanding*, that he is *not* to be esteemed a minister of the *established Church of Scotland*, or *capable to be called or settled therein*, until he shall renounce the principles embraced and avowed by him, that are inconsistent with the constitution of this Church."\*

Whatever were the views of those who moved, or of those who adopted this measure, the breach between the established Church and the secession was not thereby healed.—But to return to the Glassites.

Mr. Glas, after his deposition, continued the exercise of his ministry, (though deprived of his stipend,) and not only preached occasionally in most of the principal towns in Scotland at different periods; but erected churches, wherever he found a competent number of persons who adopted and coincided with his opinions.


The most numerous of these was the congregation which assembled at *Dundee*, composed of such of the inhabitants of *Tealing* as adhered to Mr. Glas after his deposition, and some of the inhabitants of *Dundee* and its vicinity, who followed their example; all of whom, however, did not, for several years, amount to two hundred persons at any one time. But soon after the erection of that church at *Dundee*, smaller congregations were put into church order at different places; such as *Edinburgh*, *Perth*, *Dunkeld*, *Ar-*

\* *Scots Magazine*, vol. i. p. 233.

*broath, Montrose, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Paisley, Galashiels, Newcastle, &c.*

Glas, as has been observed, published a variety of tracts and treatises at different periods, mostly in the polemical style;\* and a Mr. *Robert Sandeman*, originally educated and destined for the ministry of the established Church, having embraced Mr. Glas's principles, was soon after ordained an elder of the church at Perth, from whence he afterward moved to Edinburgh.

The writings of the late *Mr. James Hervey*, of *Weston Flavel*, having attracted much attention, especially among those who held what are commonly called *Calvinistic* doctrines, and Mr. Sandeman considering some of Mr. Hervey's sentiments, as well as those of various authors, whom he recommended, both in his *Meditations*, and in his *Dialogues between Theron and Aspasio*, as very erroneous and unscriptural; the former, in a series of letters, entitled, *Letters on Theron and Aspasio*, (first published at Edinburgh in 1757, afterward at the same place in 1759, and latterly at London, in two volumes 8vo, 1768,)

\*  Mr. Glas, who was a native of Fife, died in 1773, at the age of 78. He had fifteen children, all of whom he outlived. His son George was the well known and unfortunate Captain Glas, author of the *History and Conquest of the Canary Islands*, 4to, and of a *Description of Teneriffe*, &c. He was barbarously murdered by some villains in his ship, who were aware that she contained much treasure.

combated not only the doctrines of Mr. Hervey, and other popular authors, but those of the more fashionable preachers, and even of some celebrated philosophers, such as *Locke, D. Hume, &c.*


These Letters, which Sandeman published under the signature of PALÆMON, were written in a style more suited to attract general notice than that of Mr. Glas; though the peculiar doctrines and tenets of both are in perfect unison. Sandeman's attacks were so pointed, or, as some said, executed with so much acrimony, that they gave great offence, especially to the devout on both sides of the Tweed; and so generally displeasing were they considered, that the celebrated Mr. *George Whitfield*, when preaching at Edinburgh, about the time of the first publication of these Letters, it was said, observed, that "the author of those Letters ought to be called *Ishmael*, because his hand is against every man, and therefore every man's hand ought to be against him."

Chiefly, as it was commonly said, in consequence of reading those Letters, some persons in London became proselytes to the principles and opinions of Sandeman, and were, for that reason, there denominated *Sandemanians*; and in the year 1762, a small congregation of those proselytes were put into church order, upon the principles of Glas and Sandeman; as were also, some years after, smaller congregations in different parts of *Yorkshire, at Nottingham, Liverpool,*

*Whitehaven*, &c. all in communion, upon the same principles, and after the same model of the congregations denominated *Glassites* in Scotland.\*

**DISTINGUISHING TENETS.**—Having said so much on the origin of this sect, it seems proper to proceed to their peculiar tenets and practices; as an introduction to which, it will be necessary to give a compendium of the faith for which they contend, and from which, they say, their peculiar tenets and practices follow as necessary consequents.

We may, then, take a summary of the faith of this sect, from the following words of Sandeman; who, speaking of his Letters, says, “The motto of the title-page of this work is, **ONE THING IS NEEDFUL**; which he calls the sole requisite to justification, or acceptance with **GOD**. By the sole requisite, he understands the work finished by **CHRIST** in his death, proved by his resurrection to be all-sufficient to justify the guilty; that the whole benefit of this event is conveyed to men, only by the apostolic report concerning it; that every one who understands this report to be true, or is persuaded that the event actually happened, as testified by the apostles, is justified, and finds relief to his guilty conscience; that he is re-

\*  Mr. *S. Pike*, pastor of an independent congregation in London, and a lecturer at *Pinner's Hall*, joined the Sandemanians in London in 1765, and became an eminent preacher among them.

lieved, not by finding any favourable symptom about his own heart, but by finding their report to be true; that the event itself, which is reported, becomes his relief so soon as it stands true in his mind, and accordingly becomes his faith; that all the Divine power which operates on the minds of men, either to give the first relief to their consciences, or to influence them in every part of their obedience to the gospel, is persuasive power, or the forcible conviction of truth.

“ That all men are equally fit for justification, or equally destitute of any plea for acceptance with GOD; that those called the *stricter* sort, cannot, by their utmost assiduity in devotion, contribute any more to this end, than the most notorious felons, ready to suffer for their crimes; that, in this respect, no one of mankind has the least room to glory over another; that man’s impotency to do what is pleasing to GOD, lies in the aversion of his will; and that all men are as *able* to please God as they are *willing*.

“ That the supernatural facts recorded in the writings of the apostles, open to view a further discovery of the Divine character, than can be learned from any thing observable in the course of nature; that in the work finished by CHRIST on the cross, this new discovery of the Divine character was made; that thence it appeared that GOD might be just in justifying the ungodly, or


those who have nothing about them but what fits them for condemnation; that this is proved and demonstrated, with evidence sufficient to counterbalance all objections, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead; that every one who is persuaded of the fact of Christ's resurrection, as circumstanced in the Gospel History, even when he finds nothing about himself in the way of wish, desire, or otherwise, but what renders him obnoxious to the Divine displeasure, knows how God may be just in justifying him, and receiving him into favour presently as he stands; so finds relief from the disquieting fear, for which no remedy can be found by any argument drawn from any appearance of God in the course of nature.

“ That the great mistake of popular preachers, or the chief leaders in devotion, lies in this, that they cannot understand how God can appear to an unrighteous person, *just* in justifying him as he presently stands, without feeling some motion or tendency in his will towards a change to the better; whether this motion be called some faint desire to close with Christ, to trust in him, to put forth an act of faith, or by any other name.

“ That, in effect, they make their acts of faith to stand, not only for the ground of acceptance with God, but also for the evidence and proof of one's being in favour with God; that, accordingly, they show their disaffection, not only to the justifying work of Christ, but also to the works of self-

denied obedience, wherein his people are called to be conformed to him, as a proof of their being his disciples indeed; that the *appropriation* contended for in the popular doctrines, is disagreeable to the Scripture, and productive of the worst consequences; that no man can warrantably be assured that he is a Christian, a believer in Christ, or an object of the peculiar favour of God, any other way than by being assured, on good grounds, that his practice in obedience to the peculiar precepts of Christianity, is influenced by the *love* of that same truth which influenced the lives of the apostles.”\*

In fine, the *Glassites* hold no kind of communion with any church or society, nor even with any individuals, but such as profess perfect agreement with them on the absolute and unlimited sovereignty of God, and on the all-sufficiency of the work of Christ, to justify the most guilty of mankind. But while they thus contend for justification through the righteousness of Christ, imputed to sinners without works, they no less strenuously contend for the strictest obedience of every one of their members to the peculiar pre-

\*  Mr. Sandeman was a native of Perth, and died in 1771, aged 53, at *Danbury*, in America, where he erected several congregations, particularly in New England.

Besides his *Letters on Theron and Asphasio, An Epistolary Correspondence between S. P. and R. S.* (S. Pike and R. Sandeman,) and several other religious tracts, were published under his name.



cepts of Christianity, as practised in the churches planted by the apostles.

**DISCIPLINE AND GOVERNMENT.**—Hence they maintain it to be indispensably necessary to pay the strictest attention to the exercise of the law of love, as laid down in Matthew xviii. “If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go tell him his fault between thee and him alone,” &c.; and, therefore, when any one brother gives offence to another, either by word or deed, or says or does any thing which occasions uneasiness of mind, or tends to cool the affection or esteem which they ought to hold for one another, the person so offending, whatever be his rank or station in civil life, is to be immediately told his fault by the brother offended, whatever may be the rank or station of the latter. If, in the conference between the two, the brother offended be satisfied by the profession of repentance of the offender, the fault is to be forgiven, and no more heard of. If otherwise, cause of the offence is to be told to one or two other brethren, in presence of the offender; who, if his repentance satisfies them, is in like manner to be forgiven. But if the offender hear not them, or if they are dissatisfied with his profession of repentance, the cause of offence must be stated to the whole church; and if the church sustain the cause of offence, as supported by Scripture, the offender must be put away, or excommunicated by prayer.

They also contend for the strict observance of

the other rule of discipline, prescribed by the apostle, in 1 Cor. chap. 5, which differs from the former rule in this respect, that where any one who is called a brother, turns out to be, by *character*, a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, the offence occasioned by his practice is not to be the subject of *private* dealing, between two or three brethren, but must be directly laid before the whole church; who, if the character be established, must put him away by excommunication, whatever may be his profession of repentance at the time. But in this, as well as in the former case, the offending brother is to be restored to communion with the church; and love confirmed towards him, whenever it shall appear, to the satisfaction of the church, that he repents, and is in danger of being swallowed up, with overmuch sorrow, according to the apostolic precept, 2 Cor. ii. 6—8.

In both cases, the whole church must be *unanimous*: *nothing* can be done by a *majority*, or plurality of votes; for that these people think inconsistent with charity and brotherly love; and all their acts of discipline, whether in the reception, excommunication, or restoration of members, or indeed in any other matters which come under the consideration of the church, are preceded by prayer to God.

It is rather by this strictness of discipline, than by any other peculiar tenet or usage, that this

sect are to be distinguished from other dissenters; for various classes of the latter profess to hold both the faith and other tenets held by them. But this, by which the *Glassites*, or *Sandemanians*, are most readily distinguished from other sects, not only prevents their becoming numerous, but keeps their numbers in a state of constant fluctuation.

They hold it to be unlawful to have any familiar intercourse with persons excommunicated: or to eat or drink with such, in the same way as they may do with those of the world who never made their profession.

Persons desirous of being admitted members of these churches, are received with prayer, and the imposition of the hands of the presbytery; whatever may have been their former practices and characters; but only in case of their profession of the faith, and of obedience to the laws of Christ, satisfying *every* member of the church.

They not only maintain the lawfulness of baptising the children of their members, (as well as such professors as were not previously baptised,) but refuse to hold communion with those who deny the lawfulness of infant baptism; and they believe, that all children, without discrimination, who die in a state of infancy, will be found among the living in the New Jerusalem, or be subjects of the kingdom of Heaven.—Mark x. 13—16.; Acts ii. 39, and

xvi. 15, & 31.; Rom. v. 19—21.; 1 Cor. xv. 22.; Rev. xx. 12—15, &c.

These people maintain the necessity of at least *two* bishops, pastors, or *Elders*, (which they hold to be different names for one and the same office,) in each church; insomuch, that they cannot, according to their notions of the order of the churches planted by the apostles, either eat the Lord's Supper, or go about any act of discipline, in receiving, putting away, or restoring members, by prayer, without two or more elders being present.

In calling persons to exercise the office of *bishops* or *elders* among them, this sect are guided by the instructions of Paul to Timothy and Titus, (1 Tim. iii. 1—7, and Tit. i. 5—9,) according to the literal signification of the apostle's words, without regard to the literature, rank, or station of the persons to be called. Engagements in trade, if they do not distract or entangle the man with the affairs and cares of this life, afford no objection to one's being called to the office. Their elders are ordained by prayer, with fasting, and by the imposition of the hands of the presbytery, and with giving the right hand of fellowship.

In choosing *deacons*, likewise, these people are guided by the instructions of the same apostle, (1 Tim. iii. 8—13, in connexion with Acts vi. 1—6;) according to which they hold the character of the deacons to be the same as required in those

called to the elders' office; with this only difference, that the latter must be apt, or fit to teach.

*Second* marriages disqualify both elders and deacons; but none of them are allowed to continue widowers, but such as can do so with a good conscience, and without impurities, according to 1 Cor. vii., which is indeed the rule for *marriage* held by this sect, in regard to *all* their members of either sex.

They consider the apostle's words, 1 Tim. iii. 11. to be applicable to ministering widows, rather than to the *wives* of elders or deacons; the word  $\Gamma\upsilon\upsilon\alpha\iota\kappa\alpha\iota$ , denoting, in that passage, *women*, rather than *wives*, and the pronoun "*their*," being a supplement, not authorised by the original. From the apostle's other instructions, 1 Tim. v. 3, 4, 5, and 9, 10, they conceive themselves authorised to set apart any widow of *threescore*, or upwards, (who has been the wife of *one* man, and has the other characters mentioned by the apostle,) as a *deaconess*, or ministering widow, for the service, care, and example, of her own sex. The bishop, or elder, the deacon and the deaconess, these people hold to be the *only* officers, or office-bearers authorised to be appointed in any church of Christ.

WORSHIP, &c.—They assemble every first day of the week, chiefly for the purpose of breaking bread, *i. e.* partaking of the Lord's Supper; of which *every* member, who can attend, must partake, Matth. xxvi. 26—28; Acts ii. 46, and xx. 7; 1 Cor. ii. 23—29, &c.; and they hold it to

be both the duty and privilege of every male member, both to pray in the church, when called on by the presiding elder, and to exhort his brethren, according to the gifts bestowed on him. Matth. vi. 5—15. ; Rom. xii. 3—8. ; 1 Cor. 12 and 14. *passim*; Heb. iii. 12, 13, &c. After singing from the Psalms of David, (which are sung in course from beginning to end,) their meetings are opened on the Lord's day, by one of their elders repeating the Lord's Prayer; then four, or more of the brethren, pray in succession, as called; two or more verses of the Psalms, in metre, being sung before each prayer: one of their elders next prays for the Divine blessing on the reading of the Scriptures; which are generally read in the following order: one chapter of the Pentateuch, one of the historical part of the Old Testament, one of the book of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, or Song of Solomon, and one or two from the Evangelists, or Acts of the Apostles, in the forenoon; which are followed by one or two of the elders, holding forth the doctrine of the Lord and his apostles.

In the interval between the fore and afternoon's service, the disciples all dine together in one room, where that convenience can be got; which they call their *feasts of charity*, or *love feasts*, which are concluded with one, two, or more hymns, and the kiss of charity.—Acts ii. 42, 46, 47.; 1 Cor. xi. 20—22.; 2 Pet. ii. 13.; Jude 12.

The afternoon's service is also opened by singing some verses of a Psalm, which is succeeded by

one of the elders praying for a blessing on the reading of the Scriptures; when two chapters from the Prophets, and two or more from the Epistles, or the Apocalypse, are read. These are followed by another elder, praying and holding forth the public doctrine; after which, is a prayer for the *ordinance of the fellowship*, or *communication*: in which every member contributes, according to ability, for supplying the wants of the poor, and the other purposes of their common concerns.—Acts vi. 1—4.; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.; 2 Cor. ix. 1—8.; Rom xvi. 16.; 1 Cor. xvi. 20, &c.

They then proceed to the Lord's Supper; one of their elders praying first before breaking the bread, and afterward before distributing the wine; which are handed to the members by the deacons. This is succeeded by a song, or hymn, in praise of their Redeemer, taken from Rev. v. 9. and 10. See Matth. xxvi. 30, and Mark xiv. 22—26.

If time permits, the brethren are, after a prayer for that ordinance, called on to exhort one another, or to propose any question or subject for their mutual edification; according to Rom. xii. 6—8.; 1 Cor. xiv. *passim*; 1 Thes. v. 11.; Heb. x. 23—25.; and the worship is concluded with one of the elders repeating the Lord's Prayer, with singing two or more verses of a Psalm; and with the apostolic benediction.

Besides this service on the first day of every week, they meet on other days, according as cir-

cumstances will permit, for reading the Scriptures, for exhortation, and for discipline, &c. Their women are not allowed to speak in the churches, farther than professing their faith when first admitted, or delivering their minds, when called on in cases of discipline.—1 Cor. xiv. 34.; 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

Every individual, desirous of being admitted as a member, must make a profession of his faith in presence of the church; and if, after having done so, and answered such questions as are put to him, for the purpose of ascertaining his *oneness of mind* with the church, *all* the members agree to his admission, he is received with prayer, and the imposition of the hands of the presbytery, 1 Tim. iv. 14. and v. 22., and then the brethren salute him with the kiss of charity.

They hold it to be unlawful to lay up treasures on earth, and profess to consider themselves, and all that they have or possess, as liable to the calls of the poor, and the concerns of the kingdom of heaven.—Matth. vi. 19, *ad finem*; Luke xiv. 26, 27.; 1 John iii. 16—18, &c. In *ecclesiastic* matters, all the members are considered as brethren, on a perfect equality; whatever may be the difference between their ranks and stations in *civil* life.—Matth. xxiii. 8—12.; James ii. 1.; Luke xxii. 25, 26.; but they profess conscientious subjection to all in authority, and hold it to be their bounden duty to render to *all* men their dues, according to the literal meaning of Romans xiii.



They hold it to be their duty also, to abstain from eating blood, and things strangled; and, according to Acts xv. 29, &c. they allow of public and private diversions and amusements, so far as not connected with things really sinful, or as not incapacitating them to give to those who need, according to Gal. vi. 10. ; but holding the lot to be *sacred*, and the casting of it an appeal to God, (Prov. xvi. 33, &c.) they abstain from lotteries, playing at cards, dice, and all *chance* games; as well as from every species of swearing, unless when called on by *lawful authority*, in order to the confirmation of truth, and to put an end to strife.

## SECEDERS.

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NAME.—As the term *Dissenter* comes from the Latin word *dissentio*, to differ, so the appellation *Seceder*, is derived from another Latin word *secedo*, to separate, or to withdraw from any body of men with which we may have been united; and the *Seceders* are a numerous body of Presbyterians, whose predecessors first broke off from the Established Kirk in Scotland about the year 1733.

RISE, PROGRESS, AND HISTORY.—This secession arose from various circumstances, which the Seceders conceived to be great defections from the established constitution of the Kirk. Among others, it was enacted by the General Assembly, that no notice should be taken, in their records, of any dissents or protests against their decisions; and in 1732, the Assembly had under their consideration an overture, which proposed to give the power of electing ministers for vacant parishes, when the patron should not exercise his right, to the majority of heritors and elders, on the simple condition of the heritors being *Protestants*; their

non-residence, or their attachment to Episcopacy, and the exiled family, being considered as no disqualification.

Many presbyteries opposed this overture ; and remonstrances were presented against it, subscribed by forty-two ministers, and more than seventeen hundred private Christians. It was, notwithstanding, passed into an act ; soon after which, *Mr. Ebenezer Erskine*, minister at *Stirling*, in a sermon, preached at the opening of the synod of Perth and Stirling, testified against some things which he considered as public evils ; particularly this act, and the conduct of church-courts in the mode of settling ministers. The synod pronounced him worthy of censure ; upon which he, with several other ministers, protested and appealed to the General Assembly, which sustained the decision of the synod. Mr. E. then protested against this sentence also, as infringing on the right of ministers to testify against sinful courses, and as subjecting him to censure for what he conceived to be his duty. Three other ministers, viz. Messrs. *William Wilson* of *Perth*, *Alexander Moncrieff* of *Abernethy*, and *James Fisher* of *Kinclaven*, adhered to this protest. All the four were afterwards suspended ; and eventually loosed from their relation to their respective charges, because they refused to withdraw their protest, and profess their sorrow for what they had done. In their protest against the latter decision, they declared, that “ they were laid under the necessity of making a *secession*, not from the principles of the

Church of Scotland, as stated in her tests of orthodoxy, but from the prevailing party in that church, till they should see and amend their errors." They accordingly, in 1733, formed themselves into a presbytery, (to which they gave the name of *Associate*,) that they might consistently adhere to their principles, and afford assistance to oppressed congregations.

They soon after published what they called, "*A Testimony to the doctrine, worship, government, and discipline of the Church of Scotland;*" in which they state their secession on the following grounds:—

1. That the prevailing party were breaking down the Presbyterian constitution, by trampling on those fundamental rules of the church, which limit the mode of procedure in the framing of new acts;—by their tyranny with respect to the settlement of vacant parishes; by their ejection of ministers, merely for protesting against an act of Assembly; and by their threatening with the highest censures those who should admit to communion such as could not in conscience acknowledge the ministry of intruders.

2. That their conduct had a direct tendency to corrupt the doctrine of the church;—particularly, in dismissing *Professor Simson* of *Glasgow*, without any adequate censure, although it had been proved, that, besides several other dangerous errors, he had taught, that the Son is not God

equal with the Father; and in caressing *Professor Campbell of St. Andrews*, although, in his writings, he had taught that self-love is the chief motive to all virtuous actions, and had ridiculed practical religion as enthusiasm.

3. That sinful silence was imposed upon ministers, as a term of communion, in direct opposition to their vows at ordination.

4. That they disregarded all means used for reclaiming them from their sinful courses.—And,

5. That the brethren, who made this secession, found themselves otherwise precluded from maintaining a proper testimony against these and other evils.

They continued, however, to hold communion with several members of the established Church, till such time as there seemed to them to be no reason to expect any redress of grievances.

In 1734, the General Assembly empowered the synod of Perth and Stirling to restore these ministers to their parishes, and they have been blamed for not returning to the Establishment on this occasion. But, after frequent meetings for deliberation as to their duty, they judged that the principal grounds of their secession were yet remaining, as this appointment neither condemned the act of the preceding Assembly, nor the conduct of the commission—as there had been no sufficient testimony

against intrusions, or against the corrupt doctrine taught in the church, and as there had been no vindication of the right of ministers to testify against defections. This appointment they therefore considered to be rather an act of *grace* than of *justice*; and no proper reparation having been made for the injury done to truth, they conceived they could not return to the church-courts upon this ground.

They afterwards published what was called a *Judicial Testimony, Act, Declaration, &c.* more particularly expressing their adherence to former reformations, and their condemnation of various courses of defection. This was enacted in 1736, and to this it has been the custom to require an accession from all those who are admitted to communion with the society.

The leaders in the Establishment being greatly provoked by the plainness of this second Testimony, and the success with which it was attended; as it was followed by the accession of several ministers, and of a great body of private Christians; the seceding ministers were libelled, and cited to appear before the Assembly in 1739. But when they appeared, as the Assembly chiefly consisted of intruders, and of others deeply engaged in defection, they declined its authority, as not being a rightly constituted court of Christ. In consequence of this, without any charge, either of error or of immorality, they were deposed (by the next Assembly, 1740) from the ministerial office, as to the exercise of it in the Establishment.

As they declared their adherence to the covenants of their ancestors, they proceeded, in 1743, to renew them, in a bond or engagement, suited to their circumstances. In this, they tell us, they did not intermeddle with civil matters, but entirely confined themselves to those that are sacred, or such things as are properly connected with religion. In 1745, the seceding ministers were become so numerous, that they disjoined themselves into *three* different presbyteries, under one *Synod*, when a very unprofitable dispute divided them into two parties.\*

BURGHERS AND ANTIBURGHERS.—In their synod every thing was conducted with the greatest harmony, till they entered on the consideration of the following clause contained in the *Burgess-oath*, administered in several of the Royal boroughs of Scotland:—"I protest before God, and your lordships, that I profess, and allow with my heart, the true religion, presently professed within this realm, and authorised by the laws thereof: I shall abide thereat, and defend the same to my life's end: renouncing the Roman religion called Papistry."—Mrs. Ebenezer and Ralph Erskines, James Fisher, and others, maintained, that there was no inconsistency in Seceders swearing this oath, because the religion established in Scotland was still the *true religion*, notwithstanding all the faults in the manner of professing or of settling it; and these, on account of their sentiments, were called BURGHERS.

\* The first meeting of the Synod in the secession was held at Stirling, 1st Tuesday of March, 1745.

Messrs *Alexander Moncreiff*, *Thomas Mair*, *Adam Gib*, and others, no less warmly contended, that this clause could not be sworn by Seceders, without a renunciation of their testimony ; because swearing to the true religion presently professed and authorised by the laws, imported a swearing to *it* as professed and authorised ; and therefore, an approbation under the solemnity of an oath, of those very corruptions which they had already condemned ; and hence they were denominated ANTI-BURGHERS.\*

After much sharp contention, it was at length determined, by a vote of synod, that the swearing of this clause by Seceders was unlawful or inconsistent with their Testimony. Some members, however, protested against this sentence. It being afterwards made a question whether this sentence should be a term of ministerial and Christian communion, a majority of members protested against this being put to the vote, because it did not appear to them that it was the proper business of the synod ; for they contended, that the synod ought, according to the common order of courts, to consider the reasons of the last protest and answers. But the vote being put, it carried that it should not be a term of communion. Upon this the two parties separated ; and the *Antiburghers*, after several previous steps, proceeded to pronounce the sentence of the

\* This name, however has never been acknowledged by the society, who designate themselves, *The General Associate Synod*.



higher excommunication against the *Burghers*, on the ground of their sin, and of their contumacy in it. But an approbation of this and the preceding censures, has never been made a term either of Christian or of ministerial communion among the *Antiburghers*.

This rupture took place in 1747, since which period they have met in different synods, and no attempts to effect a reunion have yet been successful. They still hold separate communion, although much of their former hostility has been laid aside; and each of the societies, thus divided, has still claimed to itself the lawful constitution of *The Associate Synod*. The *Antiburghers* consider the *Burghers* as too lax, and not sufficiently stedfast to their testimony. The *Burghers*, on the other hand, contend, that the *Antiburghers* are too rigid, in that they have introduced new terms of communion into the society.

The established Kirk of Scotland, both parties tell us, still perseveres in a course of defection from her professed principles; and the grounds of secession, which at first were sufficient to justify a separation from her communion, have been increasing, say they, in number and in strength to the present day.

See <sup>o</sup>a pamphlet, entitled, "*An Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the Secession,*" by the late Mr. Brown of Haddington.

DOCTRINE, CHURCH GOVERNMENT, WORSHIP, AND DISCIPLINE.—Both parties of Seceders avow their adherence to the Scriptures as the *only rule of faith* and practice; and as they believe that few decried confessions of faith for subordinate standards, but, in order to vent some erroneous dream, they also avow their adherence to the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, the *Assembly's Catechisms, Larger and Shorter*, and to the *Directory for Worship, and Form of Presbyterian Church-government*, thereto subjoined, and to the *National Covenant of Scotland*, and *Solemn League of the Three Kingdoms*. So that their church-government is presbyterian, and their tenets strictly *Calvinistic*. But whatever might have been the views of former Presbyterians, many Seceders now profess to disavow the possibility of any obligation to propagate their principles by any means of a compulsory nature, or such as are hostile to liberty of conscience.

In the year 1742, the Associate Presbytery published *An Act concerning the Doctrine of Grace*, vindicating it against different acts of Assembly passed in prejudice of it. Their form of worship is the same as in the established Kirk; and their discipline “is much the same with what was once universally practised in the Church of Scotland, but now almost generally disused. • Hence sundry of the less conscientious Seceders falling into scandal, return to the established Church,

that they may altogether avoid, or only receive a very slight, censure.”\*

At the ordination of their ministers they use a *formula* of a similar kind with that of the established Kirk, which their ministers are bound to subscribe, when called to it: and if any of them teach doctrines contrary to the Scriptures, or the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, they are sure of being thrown out of their communion.

By this means uniformity of sentiment is preserved among them; nor have any of their ministers, excepting one or two, been prosecuted for error in doctrine since the commencement of their secession.

The Seceders have ever shewn themselves warmly attached to the established government.—See their principles respecting civil government, published by them in 1744, to which they still profess to adhere.

\* Mr. Brown's *Account*, p. 66.

# BURGHER SECEDERS,

OR

## ASSOCIATE SYNOD.

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FOR the instruction of their people, the Burghers have published, as occasion seemed to require, *A Warning against looseness in Principle and Practice*, published in 1770;—*The Re-exhibition of the Testimony, and a Warning against Popery*, both published in 1779;—and *A Warning against Socinianism, particularly in the Writings of Dr. M'Gill*, in 1789. And the doctrines which they teach, relative to faith and practice, are exhibited at great length in an explanation of the Westminster Assembly's *Shorter Catechism*, by way of question and answer, in two parts, composed chiefly by Mr. James Fisher, late of Glasgow, published by common consent, and which has undergone various impressions. This catechetical explanation was undertaken in consequence of an appointment or recommendation of the synod, previous to the above-mentioned division, although not finished till some considerable time afterwards. It is usually called *The Synod's Cate-*

*chism*; and is held in great esteem also among the members of the other branches of the secession.

For thirty years past the increase of both parties in the secession has been rapid and extensive, and the congregations belonging to both are now about two hundred, or more; some of which consist of upwards of one thousand members. Which party has the greatest number of followers, is not ascertained; but the Antiburghers have all along had the greatest number of ministers, though even here the Burghers seem to gain ground.

The supreme court among the Burghers is styled *The Burgher Associate Synod*, of which there is one in Scotland, and another in Ireland. The synod in Scotland, which commonly meets in Edinburgh in May and September, is subdivided into *ten*, and that of Ireland into *four* presbyteries:\* They have also a presbytery in *Nova Scotia*. The number of their ministers, in Britain, was, in 1802, almost an hundred, besides vacant charges, which were then upwards of twenty. They are legally tolerated in Ireland; and government lately granted 500*l.* *per annum*, and have now added other 500*l.* for their ministers; which, when divided among them, affords about 20*l.* to each, over and above the stipend which he receives from his hearers.—The *Burgher* and most of the *Anti-*

\* Their presbyteries in Scotland are, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Kilmarnock, Falkirk, and Stirling, Dunfermline, Perth, Coldstream, Selkirk, Aberdeen:—Those in Ireland are, Downe, Monaghan, Derry, and Tirone.

*burgher* ministers, with some of those who in Scotland are called *Cameronians*, residing in the United States, formed a coalition some years ago, and joined in a general synod, which they call the *Reformed Synod of New York and Pennsylvania*.

A division took place in this branch of the Secession in the year 1799. Since that time, the two parties, now quite distinct, have been known by the names of the *Old Light Burghers*, and the *New Light Burghers*. The former, who adhere to their original principles, are divided into three presbyteries, *Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Perth*; and I understand that an account of their rise and progress;—an abstract of their principles, &c. will soon be published, by authority of the Synod.

Whether the other party mean to confine their light under a bushel, I know not; but by no endeavours have I yet been able to catch a glimpse of it, more than to enable me to say, that they are warmer friends to liberty of conscience than their brethren of the *Old Light*, who seem to adhere more closely to the Covenants, and to see the necessity of a little wholesome coercion, or restraint, at least, to those whom they deem heretics.

# ANTIBURGHER SECEDERS,

OR

## GENERAL ASSOCIATE SYNOD.

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THE constitution of the *Antiburgher* society differs very little from that of the *Burghers*.

The supreme court among them is designated *The General Associate, or Antiburgher Synod*; having under its jurisdiction three provincial synods in Scotland, and one in Ireland. They have also several Presbyteries lately formed into a Synod, within the bounds of the United States of North America; and a Presbytery in Nova Scotia, immediately depending on the General Synod. The three synods of *Edinburgh, Perth, and Glasgow*, in Scotland, consist of three presbyteries each;\* and besides these, those of Elgin and Aberdeen are in immediate subordination to the General Synod.

The synod of Ireland consists of five presbyteries, viz. Markethill, Belfast, Temple-Patrick and

\* Viz. 1. Edinburgh, Kelso, and Dumfries; 2. Perth, Kirkaldy, and Forfar; 3. Glasgow, Stirling, and Kilmarnock.

Ahoghill, Derry, and Newton Limavady. They have also a few congregations in England, under the inspection of different presbyteries in Scotland. —The Antiburghers, as well as the Burgher Seceders, have a professor of theology of their own persuasion; whose lectures every candidate for the ministry is obliged to attend for four or five sessions, or winters, after having received an university education; and the trials required in order to license, or ordination, are the same as in the established Kirk.

In this branch of the secession, covenanting is practised in particular congregations occasionally, when a considerable number of individuals testify their desire of an opportunity, and satisfy their ministers, with respect to their knowledge of the nature and circumstances of the duty. It is not, however, imposed upon any; nor is it commonly repeated by the same persons. On the other hand, the Burghers acknowledge, that covenanting is a moral duty, and that the solemn vows of their ancestors are obligatory. But, since the separation, they have never engaged in that work; and the reason they have assigned for not doing it is, that this is not the proper season.

The General Associate Synod have recently published a display of their principles in a *Testimony*, and *Narrative* prefixed; in which they are exhibited in a more simple form than before, as they had till now been dispersed through a variety of different publications.

“ But the simplification of her principles did not



seem to be all that was necessary in the secession church. She had been charged by other societies with persecuting principles. Many of her members, both in public and in private stations, had, for many years, found the difficulty of even satisfying their own minds on this head. Private Christians had often felt scruples with respect to the usual engagements at receiving baptism for their children. Candidates for the ministry had submitted to be licensed, or to be ordained, only in the way of having liberty granted them to express to the court in what sense only they could be viewed as giving their assent to some articles in the public profession.

“It was admitted, that so far back as the year 1743, the Associate Presbytery had, in their *Answers to Mr. Nairn’s Reasons of Dissent*, given such an account of the origin and nature of magistracy, as to secure the rights of conscience. For they taught, that the whole institution and end of the office of civil rulers, ‘lie within the compass of natural principles.’ But a variety of other assertions in their public papers did not seem perfectly to tally with this doctrine. Particularly, they were at a loss to reconcile with this a clause in what was commonly called *The Judicial Act and Testimony*, enacted *anno* 1736; in which the presbytery condemn as sinful the toleration granted to Episcopalian Dissenters in Scotland, by the act of Queen Anne, 1712, calling it ‘an almost boundless toleration, by which the government and discipline of this church were ex-

ceedingly weakened, and a wide door was opened for laxness in principle ; as a stroke and judgment upon this church and land.’ The same language was used in the former *Acknowledgment of Sins*, with this addition, that ‘ *in consequence of this toleration, the superstitious and corrupt worship of the Church of England is set up in all the corners of the land.*’

“ They also found it necessary to extend the limitation with which the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland had at first received the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, especially with respect to that article, chap. xxiii. in which it is declared, that although ‘ the civil magistrate may not assume the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, yet he hath authority, and it is his duty to *take order*, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed,’ &c. ; and that, in chap. xxi. which declares, that those ‘ who publish erroneous opinions, — which are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ hath established *in the church*— may lawfully be called to account, and proceeded against,’ not only ‘ by the censures of the church,’ but ‘ by the power of the civil magistrate.’

“ As they acknowledged the obligation of the *covenants* of their ancestors, they also found it necessary to be more explicit than they had formerly been, in declaring in what sense they adhered to them ; and particularly, as the term *extirpation*, used in the *Solemn League*, had been generally understood as implying a resolution to

employ carnal power, they found it necessary to declare, (as they have actually done in the *New Display of their Testimony*, chap. xviii.) that ‘whatever means any persons, either in former or present times, might think themselves bound to employ for the extirpation of these evils,’ (popery, prelacy, &c.); yet they, ‘in adhering to the religious reformation engaged to in this covenant, utterly disclaim all obligation to use any methods inconsistent with liberty of conscience in prosecuting the ends of it.’

“As some seemed to have their minds warped with the idea of covenant-obligation arising from civil deeds and acts of parliaments, it seemed also necessary to rest it on its proper ground—the voluntary act of the church of Christ.

“While the overture, containing a new statement of the principles of the secession, was before the supreme court, several members opposed the proposed alteration; although it is a well-known fact, that some of these had formerly the very same scruples with their brethren. Even when this overture was enacted, with very few dissenting voices, the General Synod wished to exercise all tenderness towards those who differed from them. They could not, indeed, admit the use of two *Formulas*, or of two *Acknowledgments of Sins*. But they were willing, as far as possible, to dispense with any concurrence on the part of their dissenting brethren, in giving license or ordination. Nor did they enforce any procedure in covenanting on any

of them. They carried their forbearance so far indeed, as to allow their brethren to receive accessions to the former Testimony, if they did not reject those persons who preferred the other. Four ministers, however, protested against the synod, and afterwards formed themselves into a presbytery. In their protest, they assert, that the synod, because they prohibited the use of the former *Acknowledgment* and *Formula*, had excluded them from communion by the new terms and constitution which they had adopted. But the forbearance of the synod shews on what a slender foundation this charge is founded. They also affirmed, that the system of doctrine formerly held, ‘explicitly avows a right of private judgment competent to every man in all moral or religious concerns; so as not, however, to be incompatible with the right of rulers, civil or ecclesiastical, to judge and act in subordination to divine laws, natural or revealed, for promoting the public good.’ But, it is obvious, that here the ‘right of private judgment’ is so clogged, that there is reason to suspect, that those who should claim the benefit of it, might be permitted only to *think* for themselves; and that the free exercise of their religion might be reckoned inconsistent with the public good.

“ They charged the General Synod with Independent and sectarian principles, for no other reason, as far as appeared, but because, in former times, the doctrine of toleration was accounted a sectarian error, by too many who called themselves Presbyterians.


“The Synod were also represented as opposing public reformation, merely because they did not see the propriety of carrying on this by means of carnal weapons, or of blending civil and sacred things in the same covenant.

“It was also affirmed, that the Synod had ‘raised a new partition wall between the secession and the established Church, which would prevent a re-union, even although the corruptions were removed, of which the Seceders at first complained.’ As the dissenting brethren still declined to give a fair and particular statement of their own views, as to those points in which they differed; and seemed rather at a loss as to such specific grounds as might appear to warrant a separation; they pretended, that the new statement of the principles of the secession was not consistent with the idea of civil establishments of religion; and attempted to wrest some modes of expression in the overture, as, at least by inference, bearing this meaning. But whatever construction may be put on some expressions, and whatever be the sentiments of particular members, it is undeniable, that the Synod, as a body, carefully avoided entering into this question, being generally convinced that they had no call to it; and it being also well known, that this was a point on which they would not be of one mind.

“There is no reason to believe, that, if the corruptions complained of, in the Church of Scotland, were removed, the mere legal establishment would be viewed, by any of the members of Synod, as a sufficient bar to re-union.

“ Although the Synod, for the preservation of order and consistency of communion, found themselves reduced to the disagreeable necessity of deposing three of the four brethren who joined in the protest, the censure did not at all proceed on the ground of their peculiar principles as to the power of the civil magistrate in matters of religion, but on that of the schismatical course they had followed, particularly in erecting a presbytery, in direct opposition to the General Synod. With respect to one of the four protesters, the Synod agreed to suspend the process, because they learned that he was in a declining state of health ; and although he afterwards wrote against the Synod, no censure was ever inflicted on him.”\*

The agitation of these questions respecting the connexion between church and state, and national covenants, and the introduction of changes into the public formularies, in consequence of this, having thus occasioned a division in this branch also of the secession, and the establishment of a new presbytery ; I have likewise been favoured with the following account of it, and of the disputes which gave rise to it, by one of the protesting brethren, now a member of the *Constitutional Associate Presbytery*, which is the name by which they wish to be distinguished.

\*  The above statement of the difference between the protesting brethren and the General Synod, was transmitted to me by a member of that Synod.

## CONSTITUTIONAL

### ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERY.

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“THE members of this presbytery belonged to the *General Associate* (or *Antiburgher*) Synod, and were divided from it in the following way:—As far back as 1795, there was laid before the synod *An Overture for a Confession and Testimony, with a Narrative prefixed*, proposed as a substitute for *The Judicial Testimony*, enacted by the original *Associate Presbytery*, and hitherto used as a term of admission into the society. Soon after, were also introduced, *Overtures for a new bond of covenanting, and a new formula of questions for ordination and license*. A number of members of synod declared their disapprobation of these overtures, as containing doctrines contrary to Scripture, the Confession of Faith, and public papers of the secession on the heads of the exercise of civil authority in supporting religious institutions, liberty of

conscience, and national covenants; and they opposed their passing into a law, as an innovation of the constitutional terms of communion. Notwithstanding this opposition, the synod, after various delays and changes, did at last, in 1804, by a great majority, formally enact these overtures, and establish them as public laws. By a subsequent act, they also prohibited the ministers, who had opposed the new deeds, from making use of the former bond for covenanting, and formula of ordination; and declared, that it was expected, that they should, neither from the pulpit, nor press, impugn, or oppose, the principles now stated by the synod. This act was declared by these ministers to be a new and unwarrantable imposition on their consciences, and ministerial liberty of testifying against defections. They accordingly gave in a protestation; in which they required, that the new terms of communion should be repealed, and other grievances of which they had complained, taken into consideration and redressed: to which requisition, the synod, at their meeting in May 1806, gave a decided negative. Upon this, *Mr. Bruce*, minister of *Whitburn*, (the professor of divinity,) *Mr. Aitkin* of *Kirriemuir*, *Mr. Hog* of *Kelso*, and *Mr. M<sup>c</sup>Crie* of *Edinburgh*, presented to the synod a joint paper, in which they renewed their former protestations against the late deeds; declared, that the synod had *excluded* them from communion by the new terms and constitution which they had adopted; and that nothing remained for them but to exercise



their ministry apart, maintaining cōmmunion upon the former ground of the secession.

“ This paper may be viewed as containing an authentic statement of their sentiments upon the controverted articles, and of the grounds of their complaint against the synod. In it they declare their satisfaction with that system of doctrine held by the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland, which clearly defines the due distinction between civil and religious societies, the independence, proper province, and rights of each ; which disclaims an Erastian as well as a popish supremacy over the church, and any lordship or legislative human authority over the faith and consciences of men ; which explicitly avowed the right of a private judgment competent to every man in all moral and religious concerns, so as not, however, to be incompatible with the right of rulers, civil or ecclesiastical, to judge and act in subordination to divine laws, natural or revealed, for promoting the public good ; which never taught, that the Christian faith should be forcibly imposed, or that true religion can ever be produced or promoted by violence. They declare, that they consider persecution for conscience sake, as one of the most odious and intolerable species of persecution ; and that the spirit of Satan eminently appeared in the system of compulsion adopted by the anti-christian powers, and too closely copied in many of the statutes and measures employed against Nonconformists in Britain.

“ But they think, that, in the fullest consistency with these principles, they can maintain, that when the world, or any particular kingdom, was subjected to such tyranny, and when all who favoured reformation were exposed to such violence, the joint efforts of men of all ranks, and the co-operation of the temporal and spiritual power, were warrantable and necessary for introducing and securing a public reformation; and that associations, sanctioned by solemn covenants and oaths, (not of a mere civil, but of a religious or mixed nature,) were, in such circumstances, most needful, reasonable, and beneficial. They think also, that the ordinary exercise of civil authority, even in more quiet times, is necessary and conducive to the better promoting of the interests of morality and religion, and may warrantably be employed in settling, not only the secular affairs of commonwealths, but also the peace, order, and security of the church of Christ, in the permanent enjoyment of her own peculiar liberties and government; and also in countenancing religious institutions.

“ In these views, they declare, that they see reason to continue their approbation of the doctrines of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* on these heads, as formerly adopted in the secession, of the *National Covenant and Solemn League of the Three Kingdoms* in behalf of the Protestant interest, and of the reformation formerly attained, both in the ecclesiastical and civil settlement, as approved both in their former Testimony, and in the declaration of principles respecting civil government.

“They charge the synod with adopting and obtruding upon the body a scheme very different, with giving countenance to sentiments on these heads usually accounted Sectarian and Independent, and which they had solemnly renounced; with maintaining, that the interests of religion pertained to civil government in no shape farther than to secure equal liberty to all religious systems, while the peace and secular interests of society were not injured; so that a national religion, national churches, and national covenants, are exploded; all tests which make any religious distinctions, used for offices of power and trust, supreme or subordinate, are condemned, and the precepts, examples, predictions, and promises in the Old Testament, which have been hitherto adduced as warrants for such things, are declared to be inapplicable, and, in this view, inconsistent with the nature of the New Testament. The synod having moulded their public profession in agreeableness to these principles, and refused to repeal the obnoxious deeds, the protesters having no freedom to renounce their former profession, which they solemnly engaged to maintain through life, or to adopt that which has been substituted in its room, and finding no longer access to continue judicial contentings in synod, or to enjoy ministerial freedom in co-operation with it as now constituted, declare and protest, that in the present state of exclusion, into which they have been reluctantly driven by the prevailing party in synod, (which they wish may be short,) they shall be at liberty to maintain their

former profession and communion, as formerly stated, with ministers and people, and have a right to the exercise of ministerial or judicative powers, as they may have a call, and reckon it conducive to edification to use this right, notwithstanding any censure or sentence which the synod may pass to the contrary.

“ At the same time they disclaim all idea of following any divisive course from the reformed and covenanted Church of Scotland, and the original secession testimony, or desire of multiplying the numerous religious parties under which our land already groans. So far from this, one great reason of their opposition to the innovations made by the synod is, that they raise a new partition-wall between the secession and the established Church, with other denominations who still profess an adherence to the *Westminster Confession*, and would prevent a re-union, even although all the corruptions were removed, of which Seceders at first complained. In conclusion they declare, that they shall ever be ready to countenance any intercourse or attempts which may have a tendency to remove subsisting differences between their brethren and them, or between them and evangelical ministers and Christians of other denominations, who are willing to admit the *Westminster standards* as the basis of ecclesiastical union.

“ After waiting for some time, and finding that there was no prospect of a door being opened for

their return to the synod, but that, on the contrary, measures were employed for enforcing compliance with the new terms, the above-named ministers did, after serious deliberation, agree to constitute themselves into a *presbytery*. This took place in August 1806. They soon afterwards published their reasons for this step. As there were already *Associate Presbyteries* in different connexions, to avoid confusion, they agreed to join the term *Constitutional* with that of *Associate*, as this also might serve to express their adherence to the true constitution of the reformed Church of Scotland, as stated in her standards and reformation-acts, and to the original constitution of the Associate Presbytery and Synod.

“ See a *Statement of the Difference*, &c. published at the desire of the *Constitutional Associate Presbytery*, by Thomas M'Crie, minister of the Gospel, Edinburgh.

“ Soon after the constitution of this presbytery, it was joined by four other ministers, who were connected with the synod; and they have received accessions and applications for sermon from a number of people in different quarters of Scotland. The General Synod proceeded to depose, from the office of the ministry, four of these ministers on account of their conduct in this affair, without any charge of error or immorality.

“ Professor Bruce has published a *Review* of these censures.”

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.— The Seceders, steady to their principles, and rigid in their morals, have been understood as confining salvation within the pale of their own society; but this they deny, and believe, that all who hold the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, however much they may differ from them in other matters, are their brethren in Christ. They, however, particularly the *Anti-burghers*, hold no communion with other societies, nor do they hear orthodox ministers of a different persuasion.

Believing that the people have a natural right to choose their own pastors, the settlement of their ministers always proceeds upon a popular election; and the candidate, who is elected by the majority, is ordained among them, all the males, then in communion, being allowed to vote.\*

It does not appear that the Seceders are likely to return soon to the established Kirk, from which they broke off, though they tell us that they are willing to unite with the established judicatures, whenever they observe them reforming from the various and growing defections introduced since the revolution.

Nor is there much more probability of a speedy union, however desirable, among themselves, though in many things they perfectly agree.

With both parties of the Seceders, “I hope,” says Mr. Brown, “the gospel is preached in puri-

\* Both classes of *Burghers* allow the females also to vote,

ty, and endeavours used to commit the ministry only to serious and faithful men.—With both, ministers deliver three public discourses on Sabbath, through the most, and not a few through the whole of the year. With both, I hope, ministers endeavour publicly to catechise, and privately to visit their congregations, at least once a year, without respect of persons.—With both, the private administration of baptism is detested and shunned, as an abjured relic of popery;\* with both, ministers dispense the Lord's Supper *once*, and sundry of them, *twice* a year. Neither party *allow themselves*, in admitting to the sacraments, such as have no visible appearance of saintship, nor without examination into both their knowledge and character;—and gross ignorance of the christian faith;—neglect of secret and family worship,—cursing or swearing in ordinary conversation, or even in passion;—playing at cards or dice, idleness, or unnecessary labour or travel on the Lord's day;—apparent hatred of others, or notorious neglect of relative duties to them, or squabbling with them;—drunkenness—promiscuous dancing†—obscene language, or other apparent approaches to uncleanness—clandestine marriage‡—fornication—dishonesty

\* See above, Vol. ii. p. 309.

† This point, I understand, was reasoned in the *General Associate Synod*, when their principles were reviewed; and the only thing that the Synod then thought they could warrantably condemn was "*lascivious dancings*," as in the words of the *Confession*, or *Larger Catechism*.

‡ Their ministers will not marry any persons unless they have been proclaimed in the parish kirk on two different Sundays at least.

—smuggling—lying—reviling, and the like; are, with both, accounted scandals, sufficient to exclude one from the sacraments, till he, in a proper manner, profess his sorrow for his offence, and resolution, to guard against the like for the future.”\*

They never accept a sum of money as a commutation for any offence, as is done in the Kirk, but every scandal must be regularly purged according to the form of process in the establishment.

Yet notwithstanding all this strictness of discipline, and firm adherence to outward regularity of conduct, Mr. Brown attempts not to conceal his fears, “that many of the present generation of Seceders fall considerably short of their predecessors in knowledge, piety, and zeal.”†

\* *Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the Secession*, p. 66.

† *Ibid.* p. 76.



THE

## RELIEF KIRK.

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**K. E, NAME, &c.**—The members of the Relief Kirk is a species of Dissenters in Scotland, whose chief ground of dissent from the establishment is,—the liberty and privilege which they maintain of choosing their own ministers.

It would appear that, since the act restoring patronage in the end of Queen Ann's reign, there have always been a number of ministers in the establishment who steadily opposed the rigorous exercise of patronage, or the settlements of ministers by presentations, where the concurrence of the generality of the parishioners could not be obtained. But the sect now under consideration, which took its rise from this opposition, had no separate existence until 1752, when *Mr. Thomas Gillespie*, minister of Carnock, in the presbytery of Dunfermline, was deposed by the General Assembly, for refusing to assist at the admission of *Mr. Andrew*

*Richardson*, in the parish of Inverkeithing, the parishioners, in general, being unwilling to receive him as their pastor.

The Assembly of that year not only appointed Mr. Richardson's admission, in Inverkeithing, contrary to the wishes of the inhabitants, but also required every member of the presbytery to attend and witness the execution of the sentence, when Mr. Gillespie, and other five ministers, still declined countenancing that admission; in consequence of which, he, as the most obstinate offender, was deposed from the office of the minister, and <sup>the</sup> kirk declared vacant.

The manner and despatch with which <sup>this</sup> affair was conducted, is truly, as a minister formerly of the Relief, but now in the establishment, has observed, "*very remarkable*;" for "on Monday, the Assembly gave out this appointment; the day fixed for ordination was Thursday at eleven o'clock; every member of the presbytery was summoned to appear at the Assembly's bar on Friday, and Mr. Gillespie, who disobeyed the appointment, but obeyed the summons, was deposed on Saturday—all in one week!"\*

When the presbytery appeared at the bar of the Assembly on the Friday, Mr. G. and his five

\* Mr. Smith's "*Historical Sketches of the Relief Church*," p. 2.

brethren confessed that they had not obeyed the Assembly's appointment, and gave in an humble representation, signed by them and *Mr. Stark* of Torrieburn, as a vindication of their conduct; wherein they stated their scruples, and observed, that settlements, where there was but a small concurrence of the parishioners, had already produced a train of the most unhappy consequences, greatly affecting the interests of religion; and, if turned into the stated and fixed rules of procedure, would, in all probability, be attended with very fatal effects.

As an argument in their favour, they likewise reminded the Assembly, that that body had themselves declared, in 1736, "that it is, and has been ever since the Reformation, the principles of the Church, that no minister shall be intruded into any parish, contrary to the will of the congregation: and therefore, it is severely recommended to all judicatories of this Church, to have a due regard to the said principle, in planting vacant congregations, so as none be intruded into such parishes, as they regard the glory of God, and the edification of the body of Christ."

Yet this *Argumentum ad Conventum Generale*,—this representation and deed, which may be seen at full length in *Mr. Smith's Sketches*, p. 3, 4., instead of giving the desired satisfaction, "*highly displeased the Church*," and may be considered as having laid a foundation for the erection of the *Relief Kirk*, as a distinct and independent society.

Though the other five transgressors were involved in the same offence with Mr. G., the Assembly, "desirous to mix mercy and lenity with their judgment," only suspended them from the exercise of their office in judicatories; but after the sentence of deposition was issued against him, he still claimed his pastoral relation to the people of Carnock; and convinced that it was still his duty to preach the gospel, he determined not to be silent. When cast out of his kirk, he went to the fields, and warmly spoke to the people, from these words of St. Paul, "For necessity is laid upon me; yea, wo is unto me, if I preach not the gospel."\* "1 Cor. ix. 16.

His situation now rendered him more conspicuous and popular than before; and a chapel was soon built for him in Dunfermline, where he continued to preach to a congregation that was much attached to him, and to oppose the law of patronage in the Kirk. Nor was it long before he was joined by *Mr. Thomas Boston*, minister of Oxnam, who, being refused the presentation, when the town-council, kirk-session, and a great body of the people in Jedburgh, declared in his favour, on a vacancy in their kirk, gave in his demission to the presbytery of Jedburgh, and undertook the pastoral care of that people, in connexion with Mr. G.

Mr. Boston's cause was brought before the General Assembly, who declared him incapable of re-

\* *Mr. Smith's Sketches*, p. 6.

ceiving a presentation, or even of preaching in a parish church; and all its members were prohibited from holding ministerial communion with him.

Being thus excluded from the communion of the Kirk, these two gentlemen, and a *Mr. Collier*, originally from Fife, who had been for some time officiating among the Dissenters in England, but was now recalled to take charge of a congregation at Colinsburgh, together with some ordained elders, constituted themselves into a presbytery at this last place, whose inhabitants were the first who formally applied to them for relief, hence called "*The Presbytery of Relief*;" being willing, say they, to afford relief from the rigorous execution of the act of patronage, to all "who adhered to the constitution of the Church of Scotland, as exhibited in her creeds, canons, confessions, and forms of worship."

Such is the account which is generally given of the origin and name of this sect of Dissenters from the Establishment in Scotland; others, again, pretend to say, that the chief ground of their separation was the Arminian tenets, and the moral, or, as they call it, the legal preaching of many of the established clergy, and that the foundation of the schism was laid by the late *Dr. Witherspoon*, before he set out from this country for America. He, we are told, "collected together as many of the popular clergy who had poor livings as he could, and told them, that if they would leave their churches, without joining the Seceders, they would find a powerful assistance

from many of the people. They would build them meetings, and their livings would be doubled.”

Accordingly, many left their churches, and had some meetings built for them. It was some time before they could fix upon what name they should assume; and, therefore, as they were to give relief to those people who were plagued by the moral preachers, they took upon themselves the name of *The Presbytery of Relief*.\*

It is hoped, that this representation of the grounds of their dissent, and final separation from the Establishment, is less correct,† as it leaves room for the suspicion, that they were no less influenced to that step by *gain*, than by *godliness*; and their enemies do not fail to avail themselves of it, and to turn it to their disadvantage. And, besides, if it be admitted, it must follow, that they have not been much more consistent than the General Assembly, or so true to their principles, as might have been expected; for we are told, that “it is pretty openly talked by the *Relief* people themselves, that some of their ministers are downright *Arminians*;”‡ and

\* Hurd's *View of all Religions in the various Nations of the Universe*, p. 569.

† Since writing the above, I have learnt from a respectable minister of this denomination, that it is incorrect, if not wholly groundless.

‡ Ramsay's *Review of Hutchison's Compendious View of the Religious System maintained by the Synod of Relief*, 1779, p. 25.

the same opinion is entertained respecting some of them at the present day. Yet, however that may be, many will be apt to deny that either *patronage* or *legal preaching*, the grounds here assigned, or even the united influence of both, could furnish a plea sufficiently strong and weighty to counterbalance the ill effects of a new schism, and the mischiefs which it must unavoidably occasion to religion.

But, whatever may have been the real grounds upon which they acted, and the true motives by which they were influenced, in constituting this denomination; that it has actually existed from the time here specified cannot be questioned; and notwithstanding the great numbers that have gone off from the Establishment of late years to the *New Independents*, its members have all along been gradually increasing, insomuch, that they reckon in their communion upwards of seventy congregations, and about 40,000 members; and they are even now at a loss for pastors, to fill their new or vacant charges.

DOCTRINES, &c.—In regard to doctrines, worship, church government, and discipline, the members of the Relief Kirk differ in little or nothing from the Establishment. Their presbyteries require from every new member of their own body, as the terms of admission, a solemn and public profession of his faith in God—his belief of the Scriptures—his approbation of Presbytery, “according to Reformation principles, and his adherence to the constitution of the Church of Scot-

land, as exhibited in her creeds, canons, confessions, and forms of worship." This profession he solemnly makes unto the Presbytery, before his people, and promises to abide by these, in subjection to his brethren.\*

Such hath been their uniform practice, at the admission of every new pastor, from the date of their separation from the Kirk to the present day; and, consistently with this profession, in all their deliberations in church courts, the established laws of presbytery are consulted, and by them their transactions are regulated.

Their synod, consisting of all the ministers, and one lay elder, deputed from each congregation, meets for two years successively in Edinburgh, and every third year in Glasgow, in the month of May; and under it are *six* presbyteries, *viz.* those of *Edinburgh, Glasgow, St. Ninians, Dysart, Perth,* and *Dumfries.*

They have no academies of their own, like the Seceders, but their licentiates, or candidates for the ministry, are educated under the professors of divi-

\* Though nothing of all this, I presume, is required of their people, yet some of them, it would appear, are much higher Calvinists than their pastors; for a Relief minister, I am credibly informed, has of late found himself so very uncomfortable among those under his charge, in consequence of his having justly or maliciously, (I know not,) gotten the name which the Dutchman used at times to give to his horse, (see above, vol. ii. p. 261. note,) that he has been induced to leave them, and seek for a milder charge.



nity in the different Scottish Universities, whose certificates they acknowledge. Hence they are unwilling to be reckoned *Seceders* or *Dissenters*;\* and yet the members of the Establishment seem but little disposed to own them as brethren; for, by a late act of the General Assembly, their ministers are excluded from their communion, until they have undergone a fresh examination.

Their views of church-communion are not so contracted as those of the *Seceders*, for they permit their members, in the absence of their pastor, or when they are at a distance from any chapel in their own communion, “to join in any other society of sound Presbyterians, where the speaker is known to be orthodox, of good report, and regularly called to the ministry.” Many of their people receive the sacrament of the Lord’s supper with equal readiness in the established Kirk as in their own; and they admit to communion not only Presbyterians, but Christians of every denomination, who, “as far as they can judge, have a competent measure of knowledge, are sound in the faith, and unblamable in their lives, though not their followers.”

Mr. Gillespie assured the public, that “his views

\* “We do not separate from their communion, but approve of their ancient laws, creeds, and forms of worship. We are no enemies to them, we stand up for the original constitution and order of the Church, and are willing to assist and support them in the work of the Lord.”—SMITH’S *Historical Sketches*, p. 42.

were to hold communion with *all* who appear to hold communion with the head, our Lord Jesus Christ, and with such *only*; and their synod has determined, “that it is agreeable to the principles of the Presbytery of Relief, to hold communion with visible saints in the Episcopalian and Independent Churches.”


Further particulars respecting this denomination, may be found in “*A Compendious View of the Religious System maintained by the Synod of Relief*,” &c. by Patrick Hutchison, A. M. minister of the gospel in St. Ninians; and in “*Historical Sketches of the Relief Church; and a few Subjects of Controversy discussed, with an Address to the Burgher Clergy*,” by Mr. James Smith, minister of the Relief Church, in Dunfermline; of which work much use has been made in this statement.

They seem to have met with more opposition from the two branches of Seceders, than from the members of the Establishment, or those of any other communion; and those who wish to know what has been said against them, may consult, “*The Relief Scheme Considered; wherein the Origin of the Relief Church is traced, her Constitution and Order delineated, and the Plan of Communion adopted in her, examined*,” by James Ramsay, minister of the gospel in Glasgow; together with a “*Review*” of Mr. Hutchison’s “*Compendious View*,” by the same author, who was an *Anti-burgher Seceder*.

THE  
SCOTTISH BAPTISTS.\*

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RISE, PROGRESS, &c. It does not appear that there have been any Baptist churches in Scotland, till the year 1765, except one, of which some traces remain in a book, entitled, “*A Confession of Faith of the several Congregations or Churches of Christ in London, which are commonly (though unjustly) called Anabaptists; published for the vindication of the Truth, &c.*” The fourth impression, corrected, printed at Leith, 1653.” This edition contains a preface by some Baptists at Leith and Edinburgh, which, however, is silent with respect to the history of their Church; only it shows, that they were of the same faith and order with the

\*  For the following Account of the *Scottish Baptists*, the Author is indebted to *Mr. William Braidwood* of this place, a distinguished and very respectable elder of that denomination.

churches then in London. It is dated, "Leith, the 10th of the first month, vulgarly called March, 1652-3, and signed in the name, and by the appointment of the church of Christ, usually meeting at Leith and Edinburgh, by *Thomas Spencer, Abraham Holmes, Thomas Powell, John Brady.*"

This Church, in all probability, was composed of English Baptists, who had left their native country during the civil wars; and many of them, it may be presumed, were soldiers, since no other description of men can be thought so likely to have emigrated from England to Scotland; and it is well known, that there were many Baptists in the army which Cromwell led into this country; a considerable part of which was left behind, for the purpose of garrisoning Leith, Edinburgh, and other places.

It may farther be supposed, that this Church continued in existence only till the Restoration, when probably it was dissolved and dispersed, owing to the garrisons of Leith and Edinburgh being then withdrawn, and replaced with other troops; or to the violence of the persecution which distinguished the reign of the second Charles. Be that as it may, no traces can be found of a Baptist Church in Scotland for more than a hundred years subsequent to that period, unless it were thought proper so to denominate the late *Sir William Sinclair of Dunbeath*, in the county of Caithness, and a few of his own tenants, whom he baptised, some of them probably before the

year 1760. Their views in some things were very singular, and they never were connected with other churches.

In the year 1765, *Mr. Robert Carmichael*, now deceased, who had formerly been a dissenting minister, and *Mr. Archbald M'Lean*, then a printer at Glasgow, openly professed the doctrine of *Believer-Baptism*. The former, who was at that time one of the elders of a congregational church in Edinburgh, left them on account of his views respecting baptism, and some other points of doctrine, and went to London, where he was baptised. On his return to Edinburgh, the same year, he baptised seven persons, and soon after Mr. M'Lean, who came from Glasgow for that purpose.

The next thing which called the attention of many persons to the doctrine of Believer-Baptism, was Mr. M'Lean's Answer to *Mr. Glas's* Dissertation on Infant Baptism, which was published in 1766, in the form of letters from the author to Mr. Glas. In 1767, Mr. M'Lean removed to Edinburgh, and in June 1768, he was chosen colleague to Mr. Carmichael. Soon after this period, there was a considerable addition to the number of the church.

It would be tedious and uninteresting to describe the progress of the Baptist principles in *Dundee*, (where Mr. Carmichael was afterwards settled as a pastor,) *Montrose*, *Glasgow*, and other parts of Scotland. Suffice it to remark, that during a pe-

riod of twelve years, those principles gained ground in a slow and imperceptible manner, while they were zealously opposed by some religious professors, and by many others treated with entire neglect.

A circumstance occurred in the year 1777, which tended greatly to revive the consideration of the subject of Baptism. Mr. McLean published an answer to a pamphlet on Infant Baptism, written by a member of a congregational church at Glasgow. The answer is entitled, "*A Defence of Believer-Baptism, in opposition to Infant Sprinkling,*" &c. Soon after that period, a great many persons joined the churches at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other places; and it is remarkable, that the greater part of them came from congregational churches, who were in those days more earnest and assiduous in their endeavours to propagate the doctrine of Infant Baptism, than any other religious bodies in Scotland. Nor have they hitherto been able to prevent among their members a frequent discussion, of the subject which the Baptists allege, often produces in their minds a full conviction, that the doctrine of Christ, and the uniform practice of his apostles, warrant only the baptism of those who believe the gospel.

**DISTINGUISHING DOCTRINES, WORSHIP, GOVERNMENT, &c.**—The Scottish Baptists have some distinguishing tenets. It signifies nothing to them although a man should have been baptised in his riper years, if he does not appear to have been converted by the word and Spirit of the living God,

so as to know and believe the precious truth of the gospel, which “flesh and blood cannot reveal,” to experience its saving power, and to “bring forth fruits meet for repentance.” They have not proceeded chiefly upon the distinguishing principle of adult baptism, but on the important grounds of Christ’s kingdom not being of this world, and the obligation laid upon his disciples to keep his ordinances in a state of separation from the world, and in all things to hear *his* voice.

They consider the baptism of infants, not only as opposite to all the precepts and examples recorded in the New Testament, but as completely subversive of the doctrine of the kingdom of Christ, frequently denominated *the Kingdom of Heaven*, which admits not the fleshly seed of believers, *as such*, to be accounted its subjects, or to partake of its blessings, and its privileges; for “except a man be *born again*, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”\*

\* It is fully admitted, however, by the Scottish Baptists, that the heavenly and eternal kingdom of God consists of infants as well as adults; that some of the children of believers who grow up to maturity are of the elect of God, though such, while infants, cannot be distinguished by man; that believing parents are encouraged to pray for the salvation of their infant seed, Mark x. 13—17, and when they die in that state, to commend their departing souls into the hands of Jesus, not doubting that he will bless them eternally: and, in fine, that the whole word of God is favourable to the salvation of all those who die in infancy; at least, they are certain, that no decisive evidence can be brought from the Scriptures to shew that any one of them shall be damned.

They are particularly jealous with regard to the leading, and all-important truth revealed in the Scriptures,—salvation through the blood of Christ alone. They hold the gospel simply as it was preached by the Lord himself and his apostles, and by *their* doctrine are persuaded, that the vilest sinner, however enormous his guilt, and however poignant his convictions, needs nothing more to relieve his guilty conscience than to believe that Jesus, the Son of God, a divine person, “was delivered for the offences of sinners, and raised again for their justification,” and that “he who believeth shall be saved.” They do not hesitate to affirm, that the grace which saves the most virtuous and respectable among men, is as free and sovereign as that which saved the dying thief on Mount Calvary. They reject every doctrine, how much soever it may be modified and refined, which makes a sinner’s acceptance with God in any respect to depend on his own virtuous actions, his good dispositions, his devotional exercises, or his endeavours to prepare and qualify himself for being made a partaker of Christ, and for receiving the grace which through him is manifested towards men, altogether dead in sins. They maintain, that “a man is justified by faith, *without the deeds of the law;*” and that faith does not signify working, but simply believing, or giving credit to the Divine record; and is, throughout the whole of the New Testament, stated in direct opposition to the works of the law, and to all the fancied merit of apostate man.



At the same time, while they endeavour thus “to contend earnestly for the faith, not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,” but wishing to glory in it as “the power of God unto salvation,” they plead with equal zeal, in another point of view, for the necessity of good works. For although faith and works are opposed to each other, so far as justification is concerned, yet with respect to sanctification they perfectly harmonise. Deliverance from the power of sin is, in their view, an essential part of that salvation which Christ came to bestow, and which is promised to those who believe in his name. As “the heart is purified by faith,” and “the grace of God which bringeth salvation, teacheth those who know it, that, denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly ;” so they are fully convinced, that he who professes to believe the gospel, and on whom those effects are not produced, has every reason to conclude, that he is yet “in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.”

They consider the peculiar and distinguishing love which the disciples of Christ owe to each other, as one of the most striking evidences of true Christianity ; and they perceive, that, among the fruits of that love, works of charity, or ministering to the temporal wants of poor brethren, are most frequently inculcated in the New Testament ; and that shewing no mercy in this respect, puts a negative on a man’s pretension to the love of God, 1 John, iii. 17.

While they understand the commandments and sayings of Christ in their plain and obvious meaning, they reckon it their bounden duty to obey all the positive, as well as the moral precepts, which were delivered by himself and by his inspired apostles ; although many of those precepts appear highly absurd to worldly men, and must expose the followers of Christ to much ridicule and contempt. A few examples may be given.—They refrain from eating blood, as having been always prohibited, not only under the law of Moses, but at a former period, when animal food was given to man ; and under the New Testament, by the solemn decree of the apostles and Elders, and the whole church at Jerusalem, infallibly guided by the holy Spirit of God. Acts xv.—They observe on proper occasions, the kiss of charity, frequently enjoined upon the first churches, as a natural expression of Christian love.—They likewise imitate those churches with respect to their feasts of charity, another expression of brotherly love, and the means of promoting it ; accounting the approved example of the first churches, an authority of equal obligation with the commandments of the Lord. And they avow, and endeavour to exemplify a complete equality among the brethren, in every thing that relates to the kingdom of Christ, and their connexion together as Christians. High and low, rich and poor, in their estimation, as well as “ Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, are all one in Christ Jesus.”

The order, worship, and discipline of the Scottish Baptist Churches, are extremely simple, as they endeavour to imitate the pattern exhibited in the history of those churches which were planted by the Apostles, without regard to human systems, creeds, or liturgies. They acknowledge no standard of faith and practice among Christians, except divine revelation itself; and think themselves justified by this one consideration, that while there is a perfect and infallible standard, by which, if it be really followed, neither churches nor individuals can be led astray, it is equally unreasonable and dangerous to couple with it one which in the nature of things must be imperfect. Aside from the erroneous doctrine contained in confessions of faith, they disapprove of them, because they are used as standards or tests in addition to the word of God, and consequently engines to cramp or circumscribe all farther advancement in the knowledge of divine truth. Yet they are by no means satisfied with a general acknowledgment that the Bible is the word of God, and an infallible standard. They maintain, that the *sense* in which a man understands the Scriptures, constitutes his faith; and therefore they have no communion with those who do not profess agreement with them in the *sense* of Scripture, with respect to every thing that is essential to their faith and order.

The religion of Christ, they, say cannot innocently be accommodated to the circumstances of the times, because when that is done, it never

fails to be corrupted. According to them, it is now the same in all respects as it was in the apostolic age; during which period they affirm that there were no presbyteries, except the elderships of distinct and independent churches; no bishops, except presbyters, who were all in an equal degree bishops, or *overseers*, as the word translated bishop literally signifies; no decision with respect to church matters, without the suffrage of the brethren; nor any attempt to establish Christ's religion by human laws, or to render it palatable to the world, who love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." While, on the other hand, it was the constant endeavour of those who propagated that religion, "to give no" just ground of "offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God. They pleased all men in all" lawful "things, not seeking their own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved;" and recommended this amiable conduct to all the followers of Christ.

The public ordinances in which they "continue stedfastly," are,—the apostle's doctrine, or hearing the word of God read and preached; the fellowship or contribution for the poor, and for other necessary purposes; the breaking of bread, or the Lord's Supper;—the prayers which accompany all those ordinances; and singing the praises of God. They observe the Lord's Supper, as well as all the other divine ordinances, every first day of the week, esteeming obedience to their Lord's commandment, "Do this in remembrance

of me," one principal thing which the first churches had in view, when they assembled together on that day, Acts xx. 7. The prayers and exhortations of the brethren, form a part of their church order, under the direction and controul of the elders, pastors, or overseers of the flock, to whom it exclusively belongs to preside in conducting the worship, to rule in cases of discipline, and to preach the gospel, in distinction from the brethren exhorting one another; excepting only when persons qualified for preaching the word are approved by the church of which they are members, and regularly called to exercise their talents in that way. Such persons may preach the gospel, and baptise; but have no official charge in any particular church.

It may be proper to remark, that the elders of the churches here described are all laymen; chosen from among the brethren, by the rules laid down in the epistles to Timothy and Titus; not distinguished by any religious titles, or peculiar garb; and generally persons who are engaged in worldly business, and continue, after their appointment to the elder's office, to follow their respective callings, regarding the example of the Apostle Paul, which he emphatically urged upon the elders of the church at Ephesus, Acts xx. They who are taught, however, esteem it their indispensable duty to support those who labour in the word and doctrine, when it is needful, on account of the inability of the latter to earn a comfortable livelihood, or when circumstances require that they should be entirely devoted to the

work of the ministry ; for “ the labourer is worthy of his reward,” and “ the Lord hath ordained that they who preach the gospel, should live of the gospel.”

Their teachers claim no dominion over the consciences of their brethren, among whom they are still ranked, without attempting to form themselves into a separate class. And the official character which they sustain, gives them no pre-eminence whatever in a worldly point of view. Nor is there any exception in favour of those who have formerly been clergymen, or in a state of preparation for ecclesiastical preferment.

They admit indeed the usefulness of some branches of human learning, when these are not abused to serve the purposes of pride and vain jangling. To say otherwise, they conceive, would be to carry the matter to an unreasonable extreme ; for even he, who can read and write, is not altogether unlearned. And suppose a person has been taught to arrange and simplify his ideas, and to speak and write with fluency, correctness, and perspicuity, and has likewise gained some knowledge of the languages in which the Holy Scriptures were originally written, without neglecting a competent understanding of his native tongue, can it be thought that such attainments are evil in themselves, or that they may not be useful when sanctified to him who possesses them ? But they are fully aware that no improvement of a man’s intellectual powers can enable him to understand “ the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,” which the

sovereign “ Lord of heaven and earth hath hidden from the wise and prudent, and hath revealed to babes;” and that those theological and philosophical studies which are generally thought necessary, rather tend to increase the natural enmity of man’s heart against “ the preaching of the cross,” which was “ a stumbling block to the Jews, who required a sign, and foolishness to the Greeks, who sought after wisdom.”

They cannot add to the qualifications of a Christian teacher, laid down in the word of God; and they deny that a liberal education is *essential* to his character and office; while they reckon it absolutely necessary, that he should, with great diligence study the Holy Scriptures, which are able “ to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works.”

The discipline and government of the Scottish Baptist Churches are strictly congregational. Members are received, after making a public profession of their faith, with the consent of the whole church, expressed, when the body is numerous, by the show of hands; and every case of discipline is determined in the same manner. They esteem a conscientious regard to the law of discipline, instituted by the great Head of the Church, Mat. xviii. absolutely necessary for the safety of the whole body, and for maintaining purity of communion, and the due exercise of brotherly love.

It would exceed our limits to narrate all the par-

ticulars which, although not entirely peculiar to them, are yet distinguishable from the faith and practice of the great majority of professing Christians. But it would be improper to omit stating their views with respect to subjection to civil governors.—They consider all existing powers as “ordained of God,” Rom. xiii. 2. When equal protection is afforded to all good subjects, whatever their religious creed may be,—a privilege fully enjoyed in this country, they are thankful to God for so great a blessing, and are cheerfully “subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake; whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors, as to them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well,” 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. And when rulers are guilty of oppression, they still reckon it the duty of Christians to be subject to their authority in all lawful things,—to honour them on account of the offices which they sustain, to avoid speaking evil of dignities, to pay them tribute or taxes in a fair and honourable way, and “to offer up for them, and for all men, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks.” In no case whatever, do they feel themselves warranted to resist those in authority over them; for “whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation,” or judgment. Were any thing enjoined upon them which they conceived to be opposite to the will of God, after trying the effect of a peaceable and manly remonstrance, without obtaining redress,




they should then have no alternative but to suffer patiently or to flee from their oppressors.

Besides the tracts mentioned above, many others have been published by Mr. M'Lean, of which, his *Illustration of the Commission given by Jesus Christ to his Apostles*, is the most comprehensive and important; and an edition of his whole works is now in the press, consisting of seven or eight volumes. Of those published by other elders in this connexion, the following are the most worthy of notice.—*Two Letters to the Public on the Grace of God, occasioned by the conversion of William Mills, a condemned Felon*, by Henry David Inglis;—*Parental Duties*;—*Purity of Christian Communion, recommended as an antidote against the perils of the latter days*; and *Letters on a variety of Subjects, relating chiefly to Christian Fellowship and Church Order, in which the Author has discussed some of the points of difference between them and other Independents and Baptists*, by William Braidwood.

There are fifteen Baptist Churches in Scotland of the class above described, and some small societies, and scattered individuals, amounting in all to about 1000 members. And although in some places they have been stationary, or on the decline, yet, upon the whole, their members of late years have considerably increased.—In England and Wales there are a few churches, and smaller societies, who are of the same faith and order, conse-

quently distinct from the two great bodies, known by the names of *General and Particular Baptists*.\*

The persons who belong to the churches here described, assume no particular denomination. They wish only, in some measure, to deserve that name by which the disciples of Christ were called first at Antioch.


\*  On the other hand, there are at least two congregations in Scotland, that are in communion with the Particular Baptists in England; and, of course, are wholly distinct from the Society which has formed the subject of this article.

THE

BEREANS.\*

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NAME.—*Bereans*, in modern church history, are a sect of Protestant dissenters from the Church of Scotland, who take this title, not from choice but necessity, as they foresaw, that if they did not distinguish themselves by some name, they would be distinguished by others, by applying to them the name of the founder of the sect. On this account, *Mr. Barclay*, whose modesty was such, that he did not wish his friends to be called by his name, thought, with them, the name *Bereans* as expressive and suited to the Christian character as any other, seeing the believers of the gospel at *Berea* were highly commended for their Christian con-

\*  The following account of the Bereans was sent the author for insertion here, by one of their ministers.

duct, in daily searching the scriptures, which is the duty and interest of all believers of the gospel.\*

RISE AND PROGRESS.—The Bereans first assembled as a separate body of Christians in the city of Edinburgh, in autumn 1773, and soon after in the parish of Fettercairn.

The opponents of the Berean doctrines allege, that this new system of faith would never have been heard of, had not Mr. Barclay, the founder of it, been disappointed of a settlement in the Church of Scotland.—A respectable clergyman of the Established Church has even hinted something to this purpose, in Sir John Sinclair's *Statistical Account*, (vol. ix. p. 599.) But the Bereans, in answer to this charge, appeal not only to Mr. Barclay's doctrine uniformly preached in the church of Fettercairn, and many other places in that neighbourhood, for fourteen years before that benefice became vacant: but likewise to two different treatises, containing the same doctrines, published by him ten or twelve years before that period.—They admit, in-

\*  And I may be allowed to add, that it is *peculiarly* the duty of the members of this denomination; for, to entitle them to the honourable appellation which they have thus adopted, they ought, doubtless, of all professing Christians, to let their light shine before men in this respect, or to hold forth a good example to others, in searching the Scriptures *daily*; (an example much wanted in our days,) otherwise the name of Thessalonians or Athenians might be equally appropriate with that by which they wish to be distinguished from others.


deed, that previous to May 1773, when the General Assembly, by sustaining the king's presentation in favour of *Mr. Foote*, excluded Mr. Barclay from succeeding to the church of Fettercairn, (notwithstanding the almost unanimous desire of the parishioners,) the Bereans had not left the Established Church, or attempted to erect themselves into a distinct society; but they add, that this was by no means necessary on their part, until, by the Assembly's decision, they were in danger of being not only deprived of his instructions, but of being scattered as sheep without a shepherd.—And they add, that it was Mr. Barclay's open and public avowal, both from the pulpit and the press, of those peculiar sentiments which now distinguish the Bereans, that was the first and principal, if not the only cause, of the opposition set on foot against his settlement at Fettercairn.—Since that time the sect of the Bereans have found converts in all the principal towns in Scotland, in London, and many other places of England, as well as in different states of America, &c.

DOCTRINES.—The Bereans agree with the great majority of Christians, both Protestants and Catholics, respecting the doctrine of the Trinity, which they hold as a fundamental article of the Christian faith; and they also agree in a great measure with the professed principles of both our Established Churches, respecting predestination and election, though they allege that these doctrines are not consistently taught in either church.—But they differ from the majority of all sects of

Christians in various other important particulars, such as,—

First, Respecting our knowledge of the Deity.— Upon this subject they say, that the majority of professed Christians stumble at the very threshold of revelation; and, by admitting the doctrine of *natural religion, natural conscience, natural notices, &c.*, not founded upon revelation, or derived from it by tradition, they give up the cause of Christianity at once to the infidels; who may justly argue, as *Mr. Paine* in fact does, in his *Age of Reason*, with all others of his infidel cast, that “there is no occasion for any *revelation, or word of God*, if man can discover his nature and perfections from his works alone.”—But this, the Bereans argue is beyond the natural powers of human reason, and therefore our knowledge of God is from revelation alone: and that, without revelation, man would never have entertained an idea of his existence.\*


Second, With regard to faith in Christ, and assurance of salvation through his merits, they differ from almost all other sects whatsoever.—These

\*  I am not aware that the Bereans stand so much alone on this subject, as that they should have made it a distinguishing article of their creed.—That man could never, without revelation, have had any just ideas of God or religion, is firmly believed by more than a majority, I trust, in various other denominations. See Dr. Ellis's *Knowledge of Divine Things from Revelation, not from Reason or Nature*; a work of which a new edition seems to be much wanted.—See also the *Scholar Armed*.

they reckon inseparable, or rather the same, because (they argue,) God hath expressly declared, “ he that believeth shall be saved ;” and therefore, it is not only absurd, but impious, and in a manner calling God a liar, for a man to say, “ I believe the gospel, but have doubts nevertheless of my own salvation.” With regard to the various distinctions and definitions that have been given of different kinds of *faith*, they argue, that “ there is nothing incomprehensible or obscure in the meaning of this word as used in Scripture ; but that, as faith, when applied to human testimony, signifies neither more nor less than the mere simple belief of that testimony as true, upon the authority of the testifier ; so when applied to the testimony of God, it signifies precisely the belief of his testimony, and resting upon his veracity alone, without any kind of collateral support from concurrence of any other evidence or testimony whatever.”—And they insist, that, as this faith is the gift of God alone, so the person to whom it is given is as conscious of possessing it as the being to whom God gives life, is of being alive ; and therefore he entertains no doubts, either of his faith, or his consequent salvation through the merits of Christ, who died, and rose again for that purpose.—In a word, they argue, that the gospel would not be what it is held forth to be, “ glad tidings of great joy,” if it did not bring full personal assurance of eternal salvation to the believer ; which assurance, they insist, “ is the present infallible privilege and portion of every individual believer of the gospel.”—These definitions of faith, and its inseparable concomitant

assurance, they prove by a great variety of Scripture evidence, which our limits will not allow us to quote.\*

Third, Consistently with the above definition of faith, they say, that the *sin against the Holy Ghost*, which has alarmed and perplexed so many in all ages is nothing else but *unbelief*; and that the expression, that “it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor that which is to come,” means only, that a person dying in infidelity would not be forgiven, neither under the former dispensation by Moses, (the then *present* dispensation, kingdom,

\*  See Mr. Barclay's *Assurance of Faith Vindicated from the Misrepresentations of Sandeman and Cudworth*; in a letter to a Friend. The professed object of this tract, is to establish the assurance of a man's own justification and salvation, upon the direct *testimony of God*. “The assurance of faith,” says Mr. B. (by which he means the assurance of a man's own justification) “is established, along with the resurrection from the dead, upon the direct *testimony of God*, believed in the heart.

On the other hand, the late Mr. Archibald M'Lean, an elder of the *Scottish Baptist* communion, in his remarks on this doctrine, in a note, (p. 88, 1st Ed. or 92, 2d Edit.) of his book, entitled, “*The Commission given by Christ to his Apostles*,” affirms, that unless Mr. B. “can produce from the Scriptures, a declaration of the remission of his sins, addressed to him by name, it is absurd in him to maintain, that he has the assurance of his own personal justification and salvation, through faith in the direct testimony of God.” The answer which the Bereans return to this objection, is founded on Acts xiii. verses 32, 33, 38, 39, and may be seen in the 2d edit. of Mr. B's. *Assurance of Faith*, (12mo. 1803.) p. 50, 51. note.




or government of God,) nor under the gospel dispensation, which, in respect of the Mosaic, was a kind of future world, or kingdom to come.

Fourth, The Bereans interpret a great part of the Old Testament prophecies, and in particular the whole of the Psalms, excepting such as are merely historical or laudatory, to be typical or prophetic of Jesus Christ, his sufferings, atonement, mediation, and kingdom; and they esteem it a gross perversion of these psalms and prophecies to apply them to the experiences of private Christians, in the manner commonly done.—In proof of this, they not only urge the words of the apostle, that “no scripture prophecy is of any private interpretation,” but they insist, that the whole of the quotations from the ancient prophecies in the New Testament, and particularly those from the psalms, are expressly applied to Christ.\*

In this opinion many other classes of Protestants agree with them.

Fifth, Of the absolute all-superintending sovereignty of the Almighty, the Bereans entertain the highest ideas, as well as of the uninterrupted exertion thereof over all his works, in heaven, earth, and hell, however unsearchable by his creatures. A God without election (they argue) or choice in

\*  Those who wish to see an illustration of their doctrine on this head, may consult Mr. B's *Dissertation on the Psalms*, subjoined to the 2d Ed. of his *Assurance of Faith Vindicated*.

all his works, is “a God without existence,—a mere idol,—a nonentity.—And to deny God’s election, purpose and express will, in all his works, is to make him inferior to ourselves.”

For further particulars respecting the Berean doctrines, we must refer the reader to the works of Messrs. *Barclay*, *Nicol*, and *Brooksbank*. And to these we have authority to add a work now preparing for the press, (by Mr. *James Donaldson*, successor to the late Mr. Barclay in the Berean church at Edinburgh), wherein the leading points of difference betwixt the Bereans and other professing bodies around them, will be handled in the form of a dialogue, under the title of *Objector and Vindicator*.

WORSHIP, PRACTICE &c.—Having thus given a concise view of the origin and distinguishing doctrines of Bereanism, it only remains to mention a few particulars relative to the worship and practice of the Bereans, as a Christian society.

Infant baptism they consider as a divine ordinance, instituted in the room of circumcision; and they think it absurd to suppose, that infants, who all agree are admissible to the kingdom of God in heaven, should nevertheless be denied the initiating sign of that high privilege on earth.—They commemorate the Lord’s supper in general once a month; but, as the words of the institution fix no particular period, they sometimes celebrate it oftener, and sometimes at more distant periods, as may suit their general convenience. But they

cannot agree with those who allege, that they cannot observe the Sabbath without shewing forth the Lord's death. In observing this ordinance, they follow the primitive apostolic plan, without any previous days of fasting or preparation, as they apprehend, that such human institutions only tend to make an *idol* of the ordinance, and to lead people to entertain erroneous ideas of its superior solemnity and importance.—They discard also in this ordinance, as unscriptural, the Popish, Episcopal, and Presbyterian practice of consecrating the elements, or setting them apart from a common to a holy use; as also, setting apart the water in Baptism from a common to a holy use: They say that no change is possible (more than needful) by any form of words that men can use. The last and fullest account of that ordinance, 1 Cor. chap. xi. simply says, “And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat, &c.”—They insist, that the word *thanks* is incompatible with any notion of consecration in use among men; that the Lord, acting the part of the Father's servant, did not address the bread nor the cup, but his heavenly Father, with thankfulness; leaving thus an example to all his children, commemorating this ordinance, to give thanks to their God and Father, for his love shown in this, till their Lord come.

Bereans also hold in contempt the word *sacrament*, as commonly applied to this ordinance and baptism. The term, as expressed by the Latins, *sacramentum*, applies to the taking of an *oath*, which is not intended in shewing forth the Lord's

death, more than in the ordinance of prayer and praise. All ordinances appointed by God, as proper for the notice of his children, are works of faith, and labours of love, while an oath is to put an end to strife.—Equal and universal holiness in all manner of conversation, they recommend at all times as well as at the Lord's table. They meet every Lord's day for the purpose of preaching, prayer, praise, and exhortation to love and good works.—With regard to admission of members, their method is very simple.—When any person, after hearing the Berean doctrines, professes his belief and assurance of the truths of the gospel, and desires to be admitted into their communion, he is cheerfully received, upon his profession before the church, whatever may have been his former manner of life; because they know that all men, before they believe the gospel, are dead in trespasses and sins. Therefore they disclaim the practice of those, who, making inquiry into the former character of those who apply for admission into their communion, admit or reject, according to the nature of that report. This they say is the very reverse of the conduct of the Apostles, who preached the gospel to the vilest of men; and the moment such professed the truth of the gospel, to such they gave the right hand of fellowship, without farther ceremony. But if such an one should afterward draw back in his good profession, or discover a practice foreign to the precepts of the gospel, in that case, he is first to be admonished, and if that has not the desired effect, he is to be withdrawn from, as a disorderly walker, and left to himself.

They do not think, as some professors do, that they have any power or authority from Scripture to deliver such backslider to *Satan*; that power they consider as the exclusive right of the Apostles, to whom it was said, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven," &c. Neither do they think themselves authorised, as a Christian church, to inquire into each others *political opinions*, any more than to examine into each others notions of *philosophy*. They both recommend and practise, as Christian duties, subjection to lawful authority; but they do not think that a man by becoming a Christian, or joining their society, is under any obligation, by the rules of the gospel, to renounce his rights of private judgment upon matters of public or private importance.

Upon all such subjects, they allow each other to think and act as each may see it his duty.—They require nothing more of their members, than an uniform and steady profession of the apostolic faith, and a suitable walk and conversation.

With regard to feet-washing, and the like practices, which some other sects of Christians consider as duties, the Bereans are of opinion, that they are by no means obligatory. They argue, that the example given by our Saviour of washing the feet of his disciples, was not an institution of an ordinance, but merely a familiar instance, taken from the custom of the country, and adopted by our Lord on that occasion, to teach his followers that they ought, at all times, to be ready to perform even the meanest offices of kindness to each other.

## SCOTTISH.

OR

## NEW INDEPENDENTS.

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**RISE AND PROGRESS.**—John Glas gave rise to Independency in Scotland, as already observed, about the year 1728, since which time, the Baptists, and some other parties professing Independency, have arisen, and become pretty numerous; but their churches have been involved in an obscurity, which prevented their sentiments from being very generally known.

In the course of the last twelve years, a period remarkably fertile in speculations of every kind, the controversy betwixt Presbyterians and Independents has been revived, and is still carried on with energy and spirit. Within this period, a numerous body of Independents has arisen, whose ideas of union and discipline, are perhaps more mild and accommodating than those of the churches which had previously been collected, and which possess a greater combination of those talents.

which excite attention, and give influence to religious parties.

The members of this new sect, which forms the subject of the present article, profess to be wholly unconnected with any other society of Independents; their progress has hitherto been rapid,\* and their exertions and publications seem to have raised some degree of jealousy in the minds of the Established clergy, whose attention is once more turned from the friends of Episcopacy, to defend the order and constitution of their church against the renewed attacks of the Independents.

The institution of the Missionary Societies had excited a strong sensation among the religious of all denominations, and other events of a singular nature contributed to give rise to this spirit of religious discussion and change.

But few men felt the missionary spirit with greater ardour than Robert Haldane, Esq., a gentleman of much respectability, and possessed of an ample fortune in Scotland. Having lately been brought to think seriously of religion, and now happy in the enjoyment of that comfort which it alone can afford; those divine truths which had given hope and consolation to his own mind, he felt, in no small de-

\* In consequence of some recent disputes among themselves, which will be noticed below, many are of opinion that their members are now stationary, if not on the decline.

gree, the importance of the duty of spreading among the heathen.

Under this impression, he sold his estates, and, along with several associates, men of talents and exemplary piety, intended to employ his fortune in diffusing among the tribes of Hindostan the arts of civilised life, and the blessings of true religion. Such an example of disinterested zeal, and of individual active benevolence, we have seldom read of since the days of the good and pious Bishop Berkeley, and we may challenge all the modern philosophers and modern philanthropists to produce the like. Upon application to Government for liberty to found an establishment in the East Indies for propagating the gospel, the proposal of Mr. H. and his friends was rejected.\* But this disappointment, however great, served only to direct his benevolence into another channel; for he then turned his attention to the state of religion in his native country, and resolved to employ his fortune and exertions in propagating the gospel at home.

Accordingly, a society bearing this name, was formed in December 1797, the professed object of which was to send forth men to preach the gospel in those parts of Scotland where they conceived that this blessing was not enjoyed in its purity, or

\* It is generally supposed that Mr. H. is daily making money by the chapels which he has built in this country; but I am credibly informed, that this supposition is wholly groundless; and it is plain, I think, from the above circumstance, that profit was no part of his original object.



where it was not regularly dispensed; and hence the members of this sect are called, though perhaps improperly, *Missionaries*.\*

The formation and exertions of this Society, we are told, “had been considerably facilitated by the progress of opinion,—by the corruptions of the Scottish church, and by the religious discussions which had been excited by several publications, and particularly by the *Missionary Magazine*.” This miscellany, conducted by a minister of the Established Church, who had agreed to accompany Mr. H. to India, contained some bold doctrines, which had seldom been heard without the threshold of some obscure conventicle; and among others, that it is the right, nay, the paramount duty of every Christian who knows the gospel, and is duly qualified, to preach it to his fellow sinners.

The discussion of this controversy created a very great sensation in the religious world; and the Societies which had been formed were not dilatory

\* “*The Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home*, have all along avowed their *sole object* to be the revival of declining religion among their countrymen, and to follow out that object, by means which they conceive to be warranted by the word of God, and not in the least contrary to the laws of the country.” *Reply to the Pastoral Admonition of the General Assembly*. See *Missionary Magazine* for 1799, vol. iv. p. 293.

This Society employs its funds in procuring men to itinerate likewise in Ireland. There is a Society somewhat similar to this in England, chiefly supported by the *Independents* and *Calvinistic Methodists*.

in acting upon the principle. James Haldane, Esq., brother of the above, Mr. Aikman and others, men of some abilities, and actuated by fervent zeal, travelled at different times through the greater part of Scotland, preaching the gospel to their countrymen; and wherever they went, it was a maxim to which they invariably adhered, to “make the word of God without charge;” and as they had freely received, freely to give.

In their labours they experienced considerable opposition, particularly from the established clergy; but, “the common people heard them gladly,” and not a few of them embraced the doctrines which they taught. They were soon succeeded by other labourers, employed by the Society, who were no less successful in promoting the same cause.

Neither the Messrs. H. nor any of their friends, had yet separated from the communion of the Church of Scotland, nor had any of the established ministers declared themselves attached to their party. But, in a short time, they both thought themselves bound, in conscience and duty, to forsake her fellowship; and soon after, Messrs. Innes and Ewing, both ministers in the national church, resigned their charges, and united with them and their associates in the work in which they were engaged, in preaching the gospel throughout the kingdom. A distinct society was soon formed; and the Messrs. H., by whose zeal and influence the separation was chiefly effected, being at its head, its members have hence been also called *Haldanites*, or *Haldanite Inde-*

*pendents*, from them; but this name of distinction those gentleman very much dislike, and modestly wish to be laid aside.\*

Large places of public worship, which were at first distinguished by the name of *Tabernacles*, were erected at Mr. R. H.'s expense in the principal towns, where the word of God was declared to numerous assemblies, both by those ministers and others from various denominations in England.† Mr. J. Haldane and Mr. Aikman, were finally fixed at Edinburgh, Mr. Innes at Dundee, and Mr. Ewing at Glasgow, besides various other preachers who were established in different parts of the country. Academies likewise, supported chiefly, if not solely, at the expense of Mr. R. H., were formed at Edinburgh, Dundee, and Glasgow,‡ for the education of young men for the work of the ministry; who, when deemed qualified for preaching the gospel, were to be employed as itinerants, under the inspection and countenance of the "*Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home.*"§

\* The members of this denomination acknowledge the term *Independents* as applicable to them, yet they are by no means fond of it, "but prefer the word *Church* alone, or *Apostolic Church*, to distinguish a church of Christ from other societies called churches." *Mr. Carson's Pref.* p. 5.

† Mr. Aikman's place of worship here was built, I am told, at his own expense.

‡ These academies did not exist at the same time in these three places; but first at Glasgow and Dundee, and afterwards there was one only in Edinburgh.

§ Besides the Itinerants supported by this Society in Scot-

Thus, a succession of teachers was secured, and so well was their plan founded and administered, that while their wants were duly supplied, it presented no temptation to any to embark in the cause, whose avarice was greater than their zeal for doing good.

The Established Church, it seems, has not following the cautious policy of Gamaliel, in "letting these men alone;" for, we are told, that the ministers and leaders of this denomination have not been treated with "silent neglect," and that it was not owing to the moderation of her clergy, or the mildness of her principles, but to the superior indulgence and discernment of the civil government, that the Messrs. H. and their friends, were not punished for their non-conformity, by the terrors of the law.\*

**DISTINGUISHING DOCTRINES.**—The members of this denomination can yet scarcely be said to have their principles fixed; for though they are fully convinced that the constitution of their churches

land and Ireland, its members have sent out six missionaries to North America, and two to Denmark.

\* "The standards you defend, and to every part of which you are sworn, do not allow of separation. They allow the sword, as the last argument, to convince the judgment of the weak. So far from permitting her members quietly to depart, her avowed principles will not give toleration to any other sect. Those who yet in reality, as well as in profession, adhere to the standards of the Church of Scotland, it is well known, lament toleration, and confess it as a national sin."—Mr. CARSON'S *Reply to Mr. Brown*, p. 30. Note.

is scriptural, and that, on the whole, they are followers of the apostolical churches, still they candidly admit that they have "more to learn." They do not profess to have attained to a perfection of knowledge in the Scriptures; but agreeably to what they have attained, they profess to walk. "He then who will shew us the way of the Lord more perfectly, will do us a more essential service than were he to enrich us with the treasures of the Indies."\*

It is plain, however, that their doctrines are Calvinistical, and that they reject all articles of faith or creeds of human composition. They tell us that they have a divine and infallible standard, meaning the Scriptures; and that consistent Independents dare not adopt any other. All other sects profess to find the outlines of their system in the word of God, but they insist that the Scriptures contain a full and complete model and system of doctrine, government, discipline, and worship, and that in them we may find an universal rule for the direction of Christians in their associated state, as well as all necessary instructions for the faith and

\* Mr. Carson's *Reply*, p. 457. Whatever may be thought of some of their tenets and practices by others, every one must allow that this candour and openness to conviction, bespeak a truly Christian spirit and disposition; and it appears, that some of them at least, are daily walking according to this principle. "I do believe," says the same author, "that the churches I tely formed, owe much of their superior conformity to Scripture, compared with that of the ancient Independents, to the very objections of their opponents."—P. 201.

practice of individuals.—They must have Scripture for every thing, even for such things as could not be contained in Scripture; so that their motto seems to be, “*Quia Scriptum non legimus, ideo jussum non credimus.*” Hence they likewise reject the authority of the civil magistrate in matters of religion, and receive the Scriptures, and nothing else, as binding in the worship of God. The church of Christ, as exhibited in Scripture, they conceive to be an association which has no head upon earth; and which, as a body, can receive no laws from any one but Christ alone. The kingdom of Jesus, say they, is spiritual, neither interfering with human governments, nor admitting their interference in its peculiar concerns; and while they teach obedience to the civil magistrate in all civil matters, in religion they acknowledge no human authority whatsoever.

They profess to see an inconsistency of every form of national religion with the New Testament; nay, a civil establishment of religion they conceive to be “the very essence of Antichrist.”\*

They lay down this as a fundamental principle,

\* Mr. Haldane’s *View of Social Worship*, p. 100. And elsewhere he observes, that he considers “every society calling itself a church of Christ, which can enter into alliance with, or be adopted by any civil government upon earth, as *ipso facto* constituting a branch of the family of that establishment predicted by John under the name of Babylon.” *Appendix to Observations on Mr. Brown’s Vindication of the Presbyterian Form of Church Government.*—P. 55.

that a Christian church ought to consist of believers, or of those who give evidence of their knowing and believing the gospel, united together upon the profession of its truths, and walking agreeably to them; that it ought to be directed in their discipline and order by the Scriptures only; and that all Christians, of all ages, are bound to observe the universal and approved practices of the first churches, as recorded in Scripture.

The congregations which have been already formed, have uniformly adopted all the ordinances which they judge to have been observed by the apostolical churches; and the practices which they do not follow are—the community of goods in the church at Jerusalem—observing the Lord's supper daily—love feasts—washing one another's feet—and the kiss of love.\* These, however, they do not observe, as conceiving that they are not enjoined in the New Testament, or that they were not universally practised in the days of the Apostles.

Though similar in some things, to the more early Independents in Scotland, they differ from them in several material points; as in the important article of communion, by admitting Christians of all religious denominations to communicate with them in the Lord's supper, provided they have

\* Since the above was written, Mr. James Haldane's congregation, and some others, have adopted the kiss of love.

reason to think them to be real Christians.\* And they differ from the more ancient Independents in general, in considering all associations of ministers, for giving counsel and advice to the churches in matters of doubt, as unnecessary and unscriptural.†

In regard to politics, they tell us, that though loyal from conscience, and subject to every ordinance of man; though they wholly disclaim all idea of political changes, and their principles have never yet been contradicted by their *practice*, they have been represented as movers of sedition, and treated with reproach. They, at the same time, thankfully acknowledge that government has given no interruption to their exertions. They conceive that “Independents alone have, in this country, avowed the doctrine of Scripture to its full extent, on subjection to the powers that be.

“ They have explicitly declared, that, however

\* This, however, I am told, is not universally the case among them.

† “ I look upon all such religious associations to be both unlawful, and exceedingly injurious.” Mr. Carson’s *Reply*, p. 406.

And again, p. 404. “ I believe indeed, that the ancient Independent writers,” meaning those of the 17th century, “ have poured forth abundance of nonsense about meetings for counsel and advice.”

Yet Mr. Innes is said to be inclined to agree with the old Independents on this head; so that here also, as well as on various other points of doctrine and discipline, they are now divided in opinion.



grateful they are to God for the blessings they enjoy under our present mild government, their subjection stands upon a firmer principle than their opinion of the excellence of the constitution. They are subject to their rulers, because they are set over them by God, and we trust would be so, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.”\*

CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE.—As to church government, the members of this denomination are Independents in the strictest sense of the word, and believe that the apostolical churches, according to the model of which it is their great and professed object in all things to conform, were entirely independent, none of them being subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each one governed by its own rulers, and by no other laws than those which are written in the word of God. And for this opinion they quote the testimony of Drs. Mosheim and Campbell, both men of literary eminence, and neither of them members of Independent churches.†

A true church of Christ, Mr. H. tells us, “is a society formed for the same purpose as the churches

\* Mr. J. H. Haldane’s *Observations on Mr. Brown’s Vindication of the Presbyterian Form of Church Government*, p. 43. Those who wish to be more fully satisfied in regard to their politics, may consult Mr. Braidwood and Mr. Ewing’s *Sermons*, and Mr. R. Haldane’s *Address on Political Opinions*.

† Dr. Mosheim’s *Eccles. Hist.* cent. 1. part 2. ch. ii. Also “*De Rebus Christianorum ante Constantinum.*” And Dr. C.’s *Eccles. Lectures*.

planted by the Apostles, and whose constitution is the same with theirs. A deviation in these particulars renders it unworthy of the name.”\*

According to them, when the word Church in Scripture, in its religious sense, does not denote a single congregation of saints, it always refers to the whole body or kingdom of Christ, part of which is in heaven, and part on earth; which body does not constitute two churches, a visible and an invisible, but one church or family, consisting of different parts.

They admit that all churches, *i. e.* congregations, are connected together as being Christ’s subjects; but they insist that they are dependent only upon their King, in whose hands the supreme authority rests. And while they teach that Independent churches have no authority over each other, they allow that they may yet receive the advantage of each other’s opinion upon any matter of importance; and that intercourse may be maintained between churches, by their sending messengers to each other, as the Apostolic churches did, 2 Cor. viii. 23.—One church, they allow, may advise another, as well as an individual may advise an individual; “but any attempt to influence, by authority, the order of any church, is a departure from Scripture, and never can be attended with good effects.”†

\* *View of Social Worship*, p. 159.

† *Ibid.* p. 159. “Even voluntary associations to regulate

They likewise recommend mutual good offices, and the cultivation of an affectionate correspondence between churches, by their giving and receiving advice;—by their praying for each other, especially when any thing difficult or important occurs;—by their joining to promote the spread of the gospel;—by their communicating to each other's necessities, and by many other things of a similar nature.—“Such correspondence,” says Mr. H., “is calculated to have the happiest effects, while it allows to each church the most perfect liberty and independence.”\*

They conceive that bishop and elder were, in apostolic times, synonymous terms,† that the stated officers in all the churches then were elders and deacons, and of course that they are the only offices essential to a church of Christ.‡ With them every

ations to regulate the order of churches in a certain district, are unscriptural.” p. 158.

\* *View of Social Worship*, p. 159.

† Mr. Ewing is the only one of their authors whose works I have yet seen, who prefers the former term. It is certainly Scriptural; we cannot therefore refuse them the use of it; at the same time, unless this author is particularly partial to the name of Bishop, it might perhaps be well that he resigned it in favour of the Episcopalians, who will be apt to claim it as their exclusive right, by long prescription.

‡ Some of them approve of Deaconesses, or female deacons, as mentioned 1 Tim. v. and adopted by the Moravians, for watching over and instructing their own sex; but as yet no female offices have been introduced into their churches.

elder is a preacher, and they conceive there is no difference, in any respect, between elder and deacon, except in the offices to which they are appointed. Both are ordained by imposition of hands: and although ordination, which, they say, conveys no indelible character, is part of the elder's province, yet, when churches are newly formed, or in other like cases of necessity,\* they allow that the members, who have always the right of election,† may ordain church officers for themselves, or, at least, set them apart to their respective offices: for, in circumstances where ordination by elders is practicable, "it is proper; where otherwise, it is not necessary."

Ordination, they insist, is no where in Scripture represented as *conveying* an office, or giving any person a right to discharge that office; "the choice of the church, in consequence of their judging that he possesses the scriptural qualifications, gives him that right:" it is only the manner of setting him apart to the discharge of the duties of his office, and recommending him to the grace of the great Head of the Church. It gives him no jurisdiction in any church but in that particular one which appointed him, and as soon as he lays down, or is removed from, his office in that church, his ordination is at an end. They contend that there is a distinction of departments

\* "There is not an example of the elders of one church, ordaining the elders of another, in all the word of God." Mr. Carson's *Reply*, p. 231.

† Should they not be chosen by lots, as well as an Apostle, agreeably to Acts, i. 26.?

in the pastoral office, in that teaching and ruling are different branches of that office; “we hold that these different branches of the office require different talents, usually found in different individuals, and that consequently every church should, if possible, have a presbytery or plurality of elders. We contend, however, that all elders are pastors, invested with the full character, and may discharge any part of the office when requisite.—“It is exceedingly desirable that some, at least one (of them) should be solely devoted to the service of the church; others may properly spend much of their time in their worldly business.”\*

As they reject all systems of faith composed by man, so are they equally against all fixed codes of laws to regulate their deliberations in affairs of discipline, and strictly adhere, in this respect also, to their principle of taking the word of God “alone, in matters of religion.” The legislative authority, they tell us, exclusively belongs to Christ, and is already exercised in his word; they therefore disavow all right to *make* laws,† but admit a right to *judge* of the application of the laws of Christ, and a right to *execute* those laws, when judged to be applicable to any particular case. The *first* belongs to Jesus alone,—the *second* to the whole church,—the *third* to the rulers or elders of the church, who

\* Mr. Carson’s *Reply*, p. 181, 170.—They reject all ecclesiastical titles,—as *Reverend*, *Minister of the Gospel*, &c. together with all peculiarities of dress, as *gowns*, *bands*, &c.

† “The churches lately formed in Scotland *uniformly* disclaim, both in theory and practice, all legislative authority, in every instance, in every degree.” *Ibid.* p. 24.

may therefore be called the *executive* officers of the church.\*

The power claimed by the *whole church*, i. e. rulers and ruled, is not to make laws, but to judge of their application. The power claimed by *rulers* is not to propose that their *opinions* should be passed into laws, but to carry into execution the laws of Christ, when judged applicable by the church. Thus every case of discipline is entirely committed to the whole church, though always to be executed by the elders; nor are the members, in conjunction with the rulers, entrusted with the discipline of the church, as it respects the *brethren only*; “even the pastors themselves are to be judged by them, and admonished, if negligent or faulty.” Col. iv. 17.†

In all points of discipline, they profess to make an uniform appeal to the word of God, and to nothing else, conceiving that no case *can* occur in a church of Christ, concerning which we have not sufficient directions in the New Testament,

\* Yet, even they have no authority to execute discipline without the consent of the church; for the laws must be carried into effect by universal consent. “Complete unanimity is necessary in all the proceedings of a church of Christ.” *Ibid.*—Much less have the elders any authority to meet by themselves as a distinct judicative body, or church court, to bind the disciples by their own authoritative acts or decrees, but all the acts of their authority must be exercised in the presence and with the consent of the assembled church.

† *Ibid.*, p. 166.—See above p. 58-60.

and that the practice of the Apostles was recorded to be a complete guide for the churches in every age.\*

The application of Scripture to any particular case that occurs is pointed out by the pastor: and while he is persuaded that every act of spiritual obedience must be the result of conviction, he feels himself called upon to explain the subject more fully to those who may not completely understand it, or to remove difficulties from the minds of any to whom they may occur. And if the meanest member can point out a misapplication of the law, they are bound to hear; but unless a misapplication of the law be established, the pastors or rulers, who have authority to bring forward and enforce the rule or law with consent of the church, are authorised to proceed, as also to deal with any member or members, for obstructing the discipline of the house of God—"Complete confidence must ever prevail. With one dissenting voice, the church could not proceed.—If ever there arise such a difference as to cause a separation, it is not the majority, that makes the church, but those of them who are obedient to the laws of Christ. If there were only three against 3000, these three are the Church of Christ, and have a

\* "If the Scriptures do not contain sufficient directions for every thing regarding the individual or social conduct of the disciples, they are an insufficient rule."—"His" (Christ's) "prudence provided for every possible exigency; and his foresight embraced every future case." *Ibid.* p. 21.

right to cut off the 3000, if disobedient to the laws of Christ.”\* In every case that occurs, all that they have to do is simply to enquire under what rule of Scripture that particular case falls; and when that is ascertained, “it is not they who decide, but the King of Zion, whose orders they must obey. They affirm, therefore, that their rules of discipline are not only consistent with reason and revelation, but expressly revealed.”†

Such is the faith and discipline of this new Society, and whatever their decisions may be on any matter that comes before them, they are *final*, for they have no courts of review or means of redress for any members that are of a different opinion, or who may think themselves injured or aggrieved.

There is no such thing as voting in any of their deliberations; and in receiving new members, every one ought to be admitted by the unanimous voice of the church.‡

\* Mr. Carson's *Reply*, p. 40.

† Mr. Gilchrist's *Remarks on two late Pamphlets*, by Mr. Smith of Dundee, p. 5. Their acts of discipline usually took place on week days, when their chapels are less frequented by strangers; but those in communion with Mr. H's. congregation, now observe them on Sundays, in presence of the whole congregation, as well as other ordinances.

‡ “There is not a single member admitted, but with the full consent of the whole church. Our churches know nothing of the words majority and minority.” Mr. Carson's *Reply*, p. 82.



WORSHIP, &c.—It has already been observed, that this denomination suppose that the word of God contains a standard for worship, as well as for government and discipline; and they conceive that they tread on firm ground when they assert, that the New Testament contains instructions concerning *every part* of the worship and conduct of Christian societies, as well as concerning the faith and practice of individuals.\*—They use no form of prayer, and public worship is conducted in their congregations, also in other respects, much in the same manner as in the established kirks, excepting that they read a large, but indefinite, portion of the Scriptures at each meeting;—that in many of their chapels they use Dr. Watts's version of the Psalms, and that in most of them they stand while singing the praises of God. As to the ground of this last practice, they do not seem to be fully agreed; for while Mr. Carson insists, that their standing in singing “is not from decency, or external order, left for them to determine, but because they have *Scriptural example* for this,” (P. 24.) Mr. Ewing observes, that “in all the New Testament, there is not a single hint what posture

\* “An Independent church has every necessary instruction, either in precept, example, or by fair inference, in the word of God.” *Ibid.* p. 21.

But it must be allowed, that all human inferences, though drawn from inspired premises, must partake of the fallibility of the minds which draw them; and when such inferences are urged on others, with the high claim of divine authority, instead of being modestly submitted to their examination, a tyranny of opinion is established equal to any that was ever set up by the infallible successor of St. Peter.

was customary among the primitive Christians, in singing the praises of God, or whether any one posture was preferable to another;”\* and his congregation, I am told, is one of those that do not stand in singing.

They adopt weekly communions; and as they make no real distinction between clergy and laity, the want, or the absence, of elders and deacons, upon any occasion, in any of their chapels, is not thought a sufficient reason for preventing the administration of the holy communion on the first day of the week. They contend that, by the approved practice of apostolic churches, it is demonstrated to be the appointment of Christ, that his churches *must* observe the Lord’s Supper every first day of the week; and the evidence of this, we are told, is just as strong as that they or we are required to assemble at all on that day. Some of them likewise administer the Lord’s Supper every Lord’s day, about the very same hour at which it was originally instituted, and probably administered in the primitive church, *i. e.* about three or four o’clock in the afternoon.†

\* “*Attempt towards a Statement of the Doctrine of Scripture on some Disputed Points,*” p. 183. The practice of standing is certainly laudable, on whatever authority it may be grounded; and as Mr. E. admits, (p. 184.) that the practice of kneeling in prayer is “quite as evidently scriptural as the other,” it would doubtless be a happy improvement, were they, as well as the Methodists, to adopt that practice likewise.

† Would it not be very consistent with their principles to adopt the same *posture* also in which we have reason to

Commendable, no doubt, and truly praise-worthy, is their reviving the practice of frequent communions; but this their example will be lost, I fear, upon many of their neighbours around them, among whom there has long subsisted, in this particular, a wide departure from primitive practice.

With a view to illustrate and support the principles of this new denomination, Mr. J. Haldane published a work, entitled, "*A View of the Social Worship and Ordinances observed by the first Christians, drawn from the Sacred Scriptures alone; being an attempt to enforce their divine obligation; and to represent the guilt and evil consequences of neglecting them.*" Mr. Innes has published to the world the grounds of his separation from the Established Church; and Mr. Ewing has just published "*An Attempt towards a Statement of the Doctrine of Scripture, on some disputed Points, respecting the Constitution, Government, Worship, and Discipline of the Church of Christ.*"

On the other side, the cause of the establishment has been supported by several writers; and particularly by Mr. Smith of Dundee, and Mr. Brown, minister of a Chapel of Ease at Gartmore, near Dumblane, whose "*Vindication of the Presbyterian Form of Church Government,*" is written

think the Apostles received this sacrament, when it was first instituted? Answer—"The posture in which the Apostles probably received the Lord's Supper, was that used at their ordinary meals, so is ours."

with considerable ability. To this work, several replies have been made; but that lately published by Mr. Carson of *Tubermore*, Ireland, if not the most able and satisfactory, is at least the most full and particular; so that the discussion betwixt Presbytery and Independency is once more, since the days of John Glas, fairly before the public.

Mr. Haldane's "*View of Social Worship*," was not meant by the author as a standard or directory; but it appears to me to contain the most clear, full, and accurate account yet published of the principles and practice of this new denomination of Christians.

At the same time, as all their churches are independent of each other, some very considerable shades of difference exist among them, in regard both to principles and practice; the reader is not therefore to suppose, that all the members of this denomination will subscribe to the whole of Mr. Haldane's *View*,—or of Mr. Ewing's *Attempt*,—or of Mr. Carson's *Reply*,—or much less, of what I have here collected, for the most part from them, notwithstanding the able assistance which I have received; and, I may add, the diligent inquiries which I have made, with a view to ascertain the real state and sentiments of this new denomination.

Besides, since the above was written, a division has taken place among them, chiefly in consequence of Mr. J. Haldane's having now adopted

*Baptist Principles*, and also introduced church discipline, and mutual exhortation and prayer by the brethren, into the public service on Sunday mornings.—The congregations still in communion with that of Mr. H., likewise partake of the Lord's Supper in the course of the same service; whereas, the other parties continue to practise discipline, and the mutual teaching of private members at their *Fellowship Meetings*,\* on the Friday evenings, and to receive the Lord's Supper at the close of the afternoon service on Sundays.

As I am not aware that the public have yet before them any regular account of the history, &c. of this sect, whose members might be called, without offence, the *Scottish Methodists*, I have already extended this article far beyond its due length, and therefore must decline giving any detail of existing dissensions among them on these and some other points.

Suffice it to refer those who are inclined to enter into the merits of them, to Mr. J. Haldane's

\* Voluntary societies on week days, for prayer, reading the Scriptures, and religious conversation, are common among religious people of various denominations, and are usually called *Fellowship Meetings*; but if Independents exercise discipline, by admitting new members, reproof offenders, &c., in these societies, ought they not rather to give them the name of *Church Meetings*; and particularly, if held in houses of public worship, as is sometimes the case; for their principles require, that all *such* acts of discipline should take place before, and with the consent of, the whole *Church*?

*Reasons of a Change of Sentiment and Practice on the Subject of Baptism, &c.*; and on the subject of public teaching, and prayer by private members on Sundays, to the same author's *Address to the Church of Christ, Leith Walk*, on the one hand; and on the other, to *Observations on Exhortation in the Churches of Christ, intended to shew, that the Indiscriminate and Spontaneous Teaching of Private Members on the Lord's day, is not authorised in the New Testament*, by Mr. Aikman, all lately published.\*

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.—However zealous advocates the members of this sect appear to be, for “the similarity of the form of government, and all other ordinances in their churches, to those of the apostolical churches,” it is but doing them justice to say, that they do not rest the whole weight of their Christianity upon these, but declare “there might be the most exact resemblance in each of those points, yet not a feature of a church of saints, or holy persons.”† A truth this, which, were it ever kept in view in all

\* It must no doubt be highly desirable, that Mr. H.'s new change of principles, which has thus brought about a division in his own society, should be followed by an union, or coalition with the society, whose distinguishing tenet he has adopted. But this, I am told, is not likely to take place soon; and the chief point which keeps the two Baptist Societies aloof from each other, is said to be, that the new converts under Mr. H. do not see, with the other class, the necessity of the presence and ministration of at least one elder, to the due celebration of the Lord's Supper.

† M. . Catson's *Reply*, p. 520.

disputes of this nature, might serve to moderate their violence, and confine them within due bounds.

It remains, therefore, for this new sect, “like a city set upon an hill,” and in the midst of so many “other societies called churches,” to be “at unity in itself,” and to exhibit the true features of a church of saints; and, having torn themselves from the “wild-olive tree,” now planted in this part of the Island, to prove the superior quality of the “good tree” into which they are now grafted, by their superior fruitfulness in piety and good works.

Without these, vain must be all their claims to a similarity in any respect to the churches planted by the apostles; vain their triumph, could they prove, by the most legitimate arguments, the title of their system to a divine origin, to be preferable, not only to that of Presbytery, but also to that of Episcopacy itself;—and equally vain their pretensions, however well grounded, to a greater freedom from corruption, or to a greater degree of purity, than can be claimed by any other church, or any other society so called, upon earth.

If their churches be indeed constituted in all respects on the divine model contained in the New Testament, as they seem to maintain, they are, of course, in possession of that most invaluable treasure—“the faith once delivered to the saints.” Now, in those saints, this faith was not dead and inactive, but produced wonderful and glorious effects; and the world will be apt to dispute their

claims to it, if it do not produce in *them* likewise, the same, or somewhat similar effects: if it do not constrain them to live soberly, righteously, and godly;—if it do not render them humble, charitable, merciful, and forgiving;—if it do not make them more circumspect, more heavenly-minded, better subjects, and better Christians than the generality of their neighbours;—in a word, if it do not appear that it is seated in the heart, and not merely in the head, by its uniformly influencing their conduct, teaching them to renounce all “the works of the flesh,” and producing in them all “the fruits of the spirit.”

Such are the genuine marks of a true faith, and such are the effects with which a faith, built on the divine model of the gospel, “Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone,” will ever be attended; and nothing less than the appearance of such marks, and such evidences of their faith, can answer the high expectations respecting them, which their superior pretensions and professions have justly raised in the minds of the public.

Instead, therefore, of cherishing the seeds of discord, and of wasting their zeal and their strength in carrying on the internal war, which seems to have already broken out among them, be it rather their aim to excel others in unanimity, in charity, and in purity, or freedom from corruption. And, while they hold that every single church, or congregation, is independent on every other, let them be careful to maintain the dependence of *all* churches



on the great Head of the Church, and on that grace, without which, whatever may be their constitution, and external condition, their real state can be nothing better than that of the church of the *Laodiceans*.

SUCH are the existing religious sects and parties in Scotland at the present day. More numerous are they by far than at any former period since the light of the gospel first shone upon it; and yet unhappily, they are still increasing. But notwithstanding all our new discoveries in religion, and our claims to new improvements on the structure and constitution of the Protestant church; I suspect, that, in the opinion of many judges who have beheld our progress for centuries back, and particularly of late years, those claims are but ill founded; and those new lights that are yearly springing up around us, instead of directing our feet into the "Ark of Christ's Church," which has at all times been "fitly joined together and compacted," and will continue so, either here or elsewhere, to the end of the world, have in some cases, like *ignes fatui*, served only to lead us astray, and made us to wander still farther from it.



MORAVIANS,  
OR  
UNITED BRETHREN.

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NAMES.—The name of *Moravians*, or *Moravian Brethren*, was in England given to the members of a foreign Protestant church, calling itself the *Unitas Fratrum*, or *United Brethren*.

This church formerly consisted of three branches, the *Bohemian*, *Moravian*; and *Polish*. After its renovation, in the year 1722, some of its members came to England in 1728, who, being of the *Moravian* branch, became known by that appellation, and all those who joined them, and adopted their doctrines and discipline, have ever since been called *Moravians*; though, strictly speaking, that name is not applicable to them, nor generally admitted either by themselves, or in any public documents, in which they are called by their proper names, the *Unitas Fratrum*, or *United Brethren*.

The few remaining members of the ancient church of the United Brethren in Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland, being much persecuted by the Popish clergy, many of them leaving all their possessions, fled with their families into Silesia and Saxony. In Saxony they found protection from a Saxon nobleman, *Nicholas Lewis*, Count of *Zinzendorff*, who gave them some waste land, on one of his estates, between *Budissin* and *Zittau*, upon which, in 1722, they built a village at the foot of a hill, called the *Hut-burg*, or Watch-hill. This gave them occasion to call their settlement *Herrnhut*, the watch of the Lord. Hence arose the name *Herrnhuters*, given them in derision by their enemies, and altogether improper, but by which they have become known in some countries abroad.

RISE, PROGRESS, AND HISTORY.—Count *Zinzendorff* has very improperly been supposed to be the original founder of this community, and their enemies have contrived to propagate and support that error. Their own account, which in the year 1749 underwent a full investigation in parliament, previous to an act passed in their favour, states, that they derive their origin from the ancient *Bohemian* and *Moravian Brethren*, who existed as a distinct community, ever since the year 1457, when, separating from those who took up arms in defence of their protestations against Popish errors, they formed a plan for church fellowship and discipline, consonant to their insight into the

Scriptures, calling themselves at first, *Fratres Legis Christi*, or *Brethren after the Law of Christ*, and afterwards, on being joined by others of the same persuasion in other places, *Unitas Fratrum*, or *Fratres Unitatis*. By degrees they established congregations in various places, and spread themselves into Moravia and other neighbouring states. Being anxious to preserve among themselves regular Episcopal ordination; and, at a Synod held at *Lhota*, in 1467, taking into consideration the scarcity of ministers regularly ordained among them, they chose three of their priests ordained by Calixtine Bishops, and sent them to *Stephen*, Bishop of the *Waldenses*, then residing in Austria, by whom they were consecrated Bishops; co-bishops, and con-seniores being appointed from the rest of their presbyters. In 1468, a great persecution arose against them, and many were put to death. In 1481, they were banished from Moravia, when many of them fled as far as Mount Caucasus, and established themselves there, till driven away by subsequent troubles.

Meanwhile, disputes about points of doctrine, the enmity of the Papists, and other causes, raised continual disturbances and great persecutions at various periods, of which our limits prevent us giving a detail, till, at the time of the reformation by Luther, they opened a correspondence with that eminent reformer and his associates, and entered into several negotiations, both with him and Calvin, concerning the extension of the Protestant cause. But their strict adherence to the discipline

of their own church, founded, in their view upon that of the primitive churches, and the acknowledged impossibility of its application among the mixed multitude, of which the Lutheran and Calvinist churches consisted, occasioned a cessation of co-operation, and, in the sequel, the brethren were again left to the mercy of their persecutors, by whom their churches were destroyed, and their ministers banished, till the year 1575, when they obtained an edict from the Emperor of Germany, for the public exercise of their religion. This toleration was renewed in 1609, and liberty granted them to erect new churches. But a civil war which broke out in Bohemia in 1612, and a violent persecution which followed it in 1621, again occasioned the dispersion of their ministers, and brought great distress upon the brethren\* in general. Some fled to England, others to Saxony and Brandenburg; whilst many, overcome by the severity of the persecution, conformed to the rites of the Church of Rome.†

About the year 1640, by incessant persecution,

\* The Moravians call their members "the Brethren," just as the Quakers call theirs "the Friends."

† On the other hand, so late as 1772, many of the brethren in Poland, "who, when force was used to make them renounce their sentiments, steadily adhered to them, now, when allowed by the Russian Government the public exercise of their religion, voluntarily embraced the old Greek Church."

Dr. Erskine's *Sketches*, vol. ii. p. 198, from Walch's *Latest Narratives of the History of Religion*.

and the most oppressive measures, this ancient church was brought to so low an ebb, that it appeared nearly extinct. About this time, *John Amos Comenius*, minister of a congregation of United Brethren at *Fulnec* in Moravia, who had been consecrated a bishop at the synod held at *Lissa* in 1632, was banished the country. In his exile he wrote a History of his Church, which is a valuable document. It was translated into English, printed in London, and dedicated to the Church of England. Before his death, he consecrated his son-in-law, *Daniel Ernestus Jablonsky*, a bishop of the *Unitas Fratrum*, who afterwards, as court chaplain to the king of Prussia, transmitted, in 1735, the Episcopal ordination to the reviving church, by the consecration of one of their priests, chosen for that purpose.

The persecutions which took place at the beginning of the 18th century, were the occasion, that many of the scattered descendants of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren at length resolved to quit their native land, and seek liberty of conscience in foreign countries. Some emigrated into Silesia, and others into Upper-Lusatia, a province of Saxony, adjoining to Bohemia. The latter, as observed above, found a protector in *Nicholas Count Zinzendorff*, a pious, zealous man, and a Lutheran by education. He hoped, that the religious state of the Lutherans in his neighbourhood would be much improved by the conversation and example of these devout emigrants, and sought to prevail upon the latter to join the Lutheran church.

altogether. To this the brethren objected, being unwilling to give up their ancient discipline, and would rather proceed to seek an asylum elsewhere; when the Count, struck with their steadfast adherence to the tenets of their forefathers, began more maturely to examine their pretensions, was convinced of the justness of them, procured for them the renovation of their ancient constitution, and ever after proved a most zealous promoter of their cause. He is therefore very justly esteemed by them as the chief instrument in the hand of God, in restoring the sinking church, and in general, gratefully remembered for his disinterested and indefatigable labours in promoting the interests of religion, both at home and abroad. In 1735, having been examined and received into the clerical order, by the theological faculty at Tuebingen, in the dutchy of Wurtemberg, he was consecrated a bishop of the Brethren's church. *Dr. Potter*, then Archbishop of Canterbury, congratulated him on this event, and promised his assistance to a church of confessors, of whom he wrote in terms of the highest respect, for their having maintained the pure and primitive faith and discipline, in the midst of the most tedious and cruel persecutions. His Grace, who was well versed in the principles of church government, admitted the Moravian Episcopal succession, and, in conformity with his sentiments, the parliament of Great Britain, after mature investigation, acknowledged the *Unitas Fratrum* to be an ancient Protestant Episcopal church, and passed an act in their favour in 1749.



After the establishment of a regular congregation of the United Brethren at *Herrnhut*, multitudes of pious persons from various parts flocked to it, many of whom had private opinions in religious matters, to which they were strongly attached. This occasioned great disputes, which even threatened the destruction of the society; but, by the indefatigable exertions of Count Z. these disputes were allayed, and statutes being drawn up and agreed to in 1727, for better regulation, brotherly love and union were re-established, and no schism whatever, in point of doctrine, has, since that period, disturbed the peace of the church.

Soon after this event, their congregations began to increase, and various settlements were formed by invitation of some princes and noblemen of rank in different parts of Germany. In 1742 and following years, they began establishments in England; and notwithstanding their enemies, who by this time were numerous and active, did not fail most solemnly to call upon princes and magistrates in all countries to beware of, and repel a society, whose principles and practice they represented as most injurious to the well-being of the state, yet they met every where with the encouragement due to their real character, and their sober and industrious habits.

Thus their settlements were extended to North and South America, the West and East Indies, Russia, Asia, Africa, and Greenland, with a view to the propagation of the gospel, of which here-

after. They cannot, however, be accused of intruding themselves any where; but where invited to settle, they have always been respected and protected, except in one instance, by the unwise policy of a misguided German prince, when they were driven from a flourishing settlement in his small sovereignty, called *Herrnhag*, to the detriment of his own interests.

Count Zinzendorff, after a life of singular activity and unremitting ardour in promoting the cause of religion, died at Herrnhut, in 1760, in the 60th year of his age. It is with reason that the Moravian Brethren honour the memory of this their eminent benefactor. But they do not regard him as their head, nor take his writings, or the writings of any other man, as the standard of their doctrine, which they profess to derive immediately from the word of God.—See Crantz's *History of the Unitas Fratrum*.

**DISTINGUISHING TENETS.**—The doctrine of the United Brethren, does not differ in essentials from that of other Protestant churches. It has, however, been much misrepresented by various authors; and even modern historians, who might have received better information, have contented themselves with copying the calumniating and often contradictory reports of the worst of their enemies, to which their lives and practice for a long series of years have uniformly given the lie.

We ought, therefore, to search for their religious

tenets in such of their own publications as are authorised by their synods. Such are Spangenberg's *Exposition of Christian Doctrine* ;\*—Crantz's *History of the Brethren* ;—*Ratio Disciplinæ Un. Fratrum*, by Loretz ; and other works, some of them not translated into English. Though they themselves admit, that some persons joining them having previously imbibed extravagant notions, propagated them with zeal among their new friends, in a phraseology unscriptural and extremely reprehensible, yet opinions and practices have been attributed to them of an exceptionable nature, which they totally disavow.† Much also of the extravagance and absurdity which has been laid to the charge of Count Z. is not to be attributed to him, but to those persons, who, taking down in short hand his extempore sermons, and other discourses, in which he made use of very bold expressions, printed and published them without his knowledge and consent. The Synods of the Brethren, however, have protested against, and cancelled several collections of hymns and other writings, which contained improper and unscriptural expressions,

\* This work, which is plain and accurate, was published in 1779 at *Barby*, in upper Saxony, where the Brethren have an academy or college.

† See Mr. Latrobe's Letter in vindication of the *United Brethren*, in the *Christian Observer* for March 1809.

The phraseology which has long been considered as in a manner peculiar to the Brethren, seems to be of much older date. Thus, even St. Cyprian used this expression, "Cruci hæremus, sanguinem sugimus, et inter ipsa Redemptoris nostri vulnera figimus linguam."

though at a certain period suffered to be published without sufficient revision; but their resolutions and apologies are of course less known to the public, than the invectives of their enemies. Among these, *Rimius* stands foremost in this country, and Bishop Lavington is little more than an echo to him. The so-called *History of the Rise and Progress of the Moravians*, by the former of these, is filled with the grossest errors and misrepresentations, though he has with great ingenuity availed himself of all the foibles and indiscretions alluded to, to establish his credit as an historian.

Though the Brethren acknowledge no other standard of truth than the sacred Scriptures, they in general profess to adhere to the *Augsburg Confession of Faith*.\* Both in their *Summary of Christian Doctrine*, (which is used for the instruction of their children,) and in their general instructions and sermons, they teach the doctrine of the Trinity, and in their prayers, hymns, and litanies, address the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the same manner as is done in other Christian churches; yet they chiefly direct their hearers to Jesus Christ as the appointed channel of the Deity, in whom God is known and made manifest unto man. They dwell upon what he has done and suffered, and upon the glorious descriptions given of him as an Almighty Saviour. They recommend love to him, as the constraining principle of the Christian's conduct; and their general manner is

\* See above, vol. ii. p. 334, &c.

more by beseeching men to be reconciled to God, than by alarming them by the terrors of the law, and the threatenings against the impenitent, which they, however, do not fail occasionally to set before their hearers. They avoid as much as possible every thing that would lead to controversy; and though they strongly insist upon salvation by grace alone through faith, yet they will not enter into any explanation, or give any decided opinion concerning particular election. They have, therefore, been considered by high Calvinists as leaning to Arminianism, and by others as Calvinists; but they themselves decline the adoption of either name.—They profess to believe that the kingdom of Christ is not confined to any party, community, or church; and they consider themselves, though closely united in one body, or visible church, as spiritually joined in the bond of Christian love to all who are taught of God, and belong to the universal church of Christ, however much they may differ in forms, which they deem non-essentials.—See Spangenberg's *Exposition of Christian Doctrine*.

#### WORSHIP, GOVERNMENT, AND DISCIPLINE.

—On this head much might be here inserted, did our limits permit, as the Moravian Brethren seem to be more distinguished for their peculiar discipline, than for their religious creed.

Their worship is chiefly directed to God, in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, though in doctrine they are strict Trinitarians. All the great

festivals celebrated in other Protestant churches, are attended to by them with due solemnity; and during the whole of the Passion-week, they have daily services for the contemplation of our Lord's last discourses and sufferings. On Maunday-Thurs-day they celebrate the Lord's Supper, and also on every fourth Sunday throughout the year.

They have prescribed forms of prayer for baptisms, both of children and adults, and for burials; —a litany, which is read every Sunday morning; and one for early service on Easter-morning, besides others, which they call liturgies, and which are chiefly sung and chaunted.

Though all profane songs and dramatic music are prohibited throughout their church by the synods, yet they value and carefully cultivate music, both vocal and instrumental, as a science; and, where they have the means, they use it in their religious worship with peculiar effect. Some of their services consist entirely in singing, (the whole congregation joining,) when a succession of verses forms a connected contemplation of some Scripture subject. Two texts of Scripture are appointed for every day in the year. Their ordination services, their manner of celebrating the Lord's Supper, and other church transactions, peculiar to themselves, are very solemn and impressive. Their chapels are without pews, but have moveable benches. Plainness, neatness, and convenience, are their chief study in their construction.

Persecutions originally, and afterward inclination, caused the Moravian Brethren to have a predilection for forming settlements, where they may live without disturbance, and in which their children and young people are not exposed to the allurements of vice, nor obliged to see and hear the conduct and language of the profane and dissolute. In these settlements they have separate houses for single men, single women, and widows. In these houses, all persons who are able, and have not an independent support, labour in their own occupation, and contribute a stipulated sum for board and lodging. Community of goods does not, nor ever did exist among them, though it has been often reported and very generally believed. Even the contributions towards their charitable establishments and missions are perfectly voluntary.

Their schools are numerous, and conducted upon a plan which has recommended them to great numbers of persons not belonging to the community, as the best seminaries for moral education.

Their church is Episcopal; but though they consider Episcopal ordination as necessary to qualify the servants of the church for their respective functions, they allow to their bishops no elevation of rank or pre-eminent authority; their church having from its first establishment been governed by *Synods*, consisting of deputies from all the congregations, and by other subordinate bodies, which they call *Conferences*.

According to their regulations, Episcopal ordination, of itself, does not confer any power to preside over one or more congregations; and a bishop can discharge no office but by the appointment of a Synod, or of its delegate, the elders' conference of the unity, of which hereafter. Presbyters among them can perform every function of the bishop except ordination. Deacons are assistants to the Presbyters, much in the same way as in the church of England; and deaconesses are retained, for the purpose of privately admonishing their own sex, and visiting them in their sickness; but they are not permitted to teach in public, and far less to administer the sacraments. They have likewise *Seniores Civiles*, or lay elders, in contradistinction to spiritual elders or bishops, who are appointed to watch over the constitution and discipline of the unity of the brethren, &c. The Synods are generally held once in seven years, and besides all the bishops, and the deputies sent by each congregation, those women who have appointments as above described, if on the spot, are also admitted as hearers, and may be called upon to give their advice in what relates to the ministerial labour among their sex; but they have no decisive vote in the Synod. The votes of all the other members are equal. In questions of importance, or of which the consequence cannot be foreseen, neither the majority of votes, nor the unanimous consent of all present, can decide; but recourse is had to the *lot*, which, however, is never made use of but after mature deliberation and prayer; nor is any thing submitted to its decision which does not, af-



after being thoroughly weighed, appear to the assembly eligible in itself.

The Synod takes into consideration the inward and outward state of the unity, and the concerns of the congregations and missions, and takes cognizance of errors in doctrine, or deviations in practice, &c. Towards the conclusion of every Synod, a kind of executive board is chosen, which is called the *Elders' Conference of the Unity*. At present it consists of thirteen elders, and is divided into four committees or departments. 1. The *Missions'* department, which superintends all the concerns of the missions into heathen countries.—2. The *Helpers'* department, which watches over the purity of doctrine, and the moral conduct of the different congregations.—3. The *Servants'* department, to which the economical concerns of the unity are committed.—4. The *Overseers'* department, of which the business is to see that the constitution and discipline of the brethren be every where maintained.—Each department meets, as a committee, to consider the particular subjects committed to it; but no resolution has the smallest force till it be laid before the whole assembly of the *Elders' Conference of the Unity*, and have the approbation of that body, whose powers are very extensive.

Besides this general *Conference of Elders*, which superintends the affairs of the whole unity, there is a conference of elders belonging to each congregation, which directs its affairs, and to which all the members of the congregation are subject. This

body, which is called the “*Elders’ Conference of the Congregation*,” consists, 1. Of the *Minister*, as president, to whom the ordinary care of the congregation is committed, except when it is very numerous, and then the general inspection of it is intrusted to a separate person, called the “*Congregation Helper*.”—2. Of the *Warden*, whose office it is to superintend, with the aid of his council, all outward concerns of the congregation, and to assist every individual with his advice.—3. Of a *Married Pair*, who care particularly for the spiritual welfare of the married people.—4. Of a *Single Clergyman*, to whose care the single men and boys are more particularly committed.—And 5. Of *those women* who assist in caring for the spiritual and temporal welfare of their own sex, and who, in this conference, have equal votes with the men

As the *Elders’ Conference of each Congregation* is answerable for its proceedings to the *Elders’ Conference of the Unity*, visitations from the latter to the former are held from time to time, that the affairs of each congregation, and the conduct of its immediate governors, may be intimately known to the supreme executive government of the whole church.

In every country they have superintendants of their congregations in it, whom they call *Provincials*. These are generally bishops, but a priest is likewise eligible for that office.

In *Marriage*, they may form a connexion with those only who are of their own communion.

The brother who marries a person not of their congregation, is considered as having quitted their church fellowship. There is, however, no objection to a sister's marrying a person of approved piety in another communion; and some, by express license, are permitted still to join in their church ordinances as before. A brother may make his own choice of a partner in the society, and both parties may reject the proposals made to them; but as all intercourse between the different sexes is less frequent among them than elsewhere, and few opportunities of forming particular attachments are found, they usually rather refer their choice to their friends and intimates, than decide for themselves. And as the lot must be cast to sanction their union, each receives his partner as a divine appointment; and however strange this method may appear, there are perhaps no where fewer unhappy marriages to be found, than among the Brethren.

In their settlements, at all hours, whether day or night, some persons of both sexes are appointed by rotation to pray for the Society.

MISSIONS.—But what characterises the Moravians most of all, and holds them up to the attention and admiration, and for the example of all others, is their missionary zeal. In this they are superior to every other body of Christians whatever. Their missionaries are all of them volunteers; for it is an inviolable maxim with them, to *persuade* no man to engage in missions. They

are all of one mind as to the doctrines they teach, and seldom make an attempt where there are not several of them in the mission. Their zeal is calm, steady, and persevering. They would reform the world, but are careful how they quarrel with it. They carry their point by address and the insinuations of modesty and mildness, which commend them to all men, and give offence to none. The habits of silence, quietness, and decent reserve, mark their character. "When brethren or sisters find themselves disposed to serve God among the heathen, they communicate their wishes and views to the committee appointed by the synods of the brethren to superintend the missions, in a confidential letter. If, on particular inquiry into their circumstances and connexions, no objection is found, they are considered as candidates. As to mental qualifications, much erudition is not required by the Brethren. To be well versed in the sacred Scriptures, and to have an experimental knowledge of the truths they contain, is judged indispensibly necessary. And it has been found by experience, that a good understanding, joined to a friendly disposition, and above all, a heart filled with the love of God, are the best and the only essential qualifications of a missionary. Nor are, in general, the habits of a student so well calculated to form his body for a laborious life as those of a mechanic. Yet men of learning are not excluded, and their gifts have been made useful in various ways. When vacancies occur, or new missions are to be begun, the list of candidates is examined, and those who

appear suitable are called upon, and accept or decline the call as they find themselves disposed."

The names and dates of all their settlements, together with various particulars of their missions, may be seen in Buck's *Theological Dictionary*, under the article *Moravians*, as given by a very respectable clergyman of their denomination, whose words I have just quoted.

The number of missionaries, male and female, employed in their missions in various parts of the world, towards the close of the year 1802, was as follows:—Danish West India Islands, in six settlements, 32;—Greenland, in three settlements, 16;—Antigua, in three settlements, 17;—St. Kitts, 4;—Jamaica, in three settlements, 8;—Barbadoes, 2;—Tobago, 2;—S. America, in four settlements, 24;—Labrador, three settlements, 25;—Indians in N. America, three settlements, 19;—Hottentots at the Cape of Good Hope, 10; near Tranquebar, in the East Indies, 2; in all 161.\*

Several attempts to carry the gospel into various other parts of the earth, made by the Brethren, have not succeeded, and some missions are suspended for the present.

\* In 1807, the Brethren had four missionaries at *Goshen* in North America, who had all spent their lives from their youth in the service of the mission, and who had all attained a great age, viz.—Brothers *Zeisberger* and *Jungman*, then 87; Brother *Grube* 92; and Brother *Lister* 93 years old.

The most flourishing missions at present are those in Greenland, Antigua, St. Kitts, the Danish West India Islands, the Cape of Good Hope, among the negroes in South America, and the Esquimaux on the coast of Labrador.—From the 38th number of their periodical accounts, it appears that the state of Greenland is so greatly changed, that *Lichtenau* alone can now be considered as a mission among the *Heathens*. The inhabitants around the other two settlements, *New Herrnhut*, and *Lichtenfels*, consist chiefly of persons baptised by the Brethren, and educated in Christian principles. Those who do not belong to the Brethren's church have all been baptised by the Danish missionaries, so that “no trace of Paganism is now left in that neighbourhood.”\*

The mission in *Antigua* first began in 1757, and during the ten years preceding 1802, the number baptised in that island by the Brethren was 5424. In August 1803, the number of negroes belonging to the Brethren's church there, was upwards of 10,000, and as great a number belonged to it in the Danish Islands, St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. Jan. In St. Kitts their congregation numbers about 2000.

\* A happy confirmation this, it must be allowed, of what Mr. Cowper observed of the Brethren long ago,—

“Fir'd with a zeal peculiar, they defy  
The rage and rigour of a polar sky,  
And plant *successively* sweet Sharon's rose,  
On icy plains, and in eternal snows.”

*Poems*, vol. i. p. 164, 4th edit.

The settlement of *Bavians-Kioof* at the Cape of Good Hope, begun in 1736, was soon after suspended till 1792; and the society under the five married missionaries there, consists now of about 1000 Hottentots, nearly 600 of whom are baptised.

“*A Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel among the Heathen,*” observes the same clergyman, as above, “was instituted by the Brethren in London, as early as the year 1741, for the more effectual co-operation with, and assistance of the said mission’s department, in the *Elders’ Conference of the Unity*, in caring for those missionaries who might pass through London to their several posts. The Society was, after some interruption in their meetings, renewed in 1766, and took the whole charge of the mission on the coast of Labrador upon themselves; besides continuing to assist the other missions as much as lay in their power, especially those in the British dominions.

In *Amsterdam*, a similar society was established by the Brethren in 1746, and revived in 1793, at *Zeist* near Utrecht. This society took particular charge of the mission at the Cape of Good Hope; but the late troubles in Holland have rendered them unable to lend much assistance for the present.

The Brethren in North America established a society for propagating the gospel among the Heathen, in the year 1787, which was incorporated by the state of Pennsylvania, and has been very active in assisting the missions among the American Indians.

These three societies do all in their power to help to support the great and accumulated burdens of the above mentioned mission's department, and God has laid a blessing upon their exertions. But they have no power to begin new missions, or to send out missionaries, which, by the Synods of the Brethren's Church, is vested solely in the *Elders' Conference of Unity*.

For much information on the subject of their missions, See Crantz's *History of their Mission in Greenland*; and the periodical accounts of their missions, of which 54 numbers have already been published.

COUNTRIES WHERE FOUND.—On this head little further needs be said, except that, in Christian countries, they are to be found in considerable numbers in some parts of Germany,\* Holland, England, Ireland, and America. They have also a small society at Ayr in Scotland.

There is a regular settlement of the Brethren at *Pulnec*, near Leeds, Yorkshire; another at *Fairfield*, near Manchester; and a small one at *Ok-*

\* Viz In and about Berlin, at Dresden, in Lusatia, Silesia, &c. In Berlin, king Frederick-William I. had a church built for them, and paid their ministers; but he demanded of them, that they should either join the Lutheran or Reformed party; and as some chose the one, and some the other, two ministers were appointed, who performed divine service in the same church by turns; a custom which continues to this day.



*brook*, near Derby, which excite the curiosity of the traveller.\*—In 1749 an act of parliament was passed in their favour, to relieve them from taking oaths, about which some had conscientious scruples; yet they make declarations “in the *presence of God*,” considering God as “a *witness*,” which amounts to nearly the same thing. The public has yet felt no inconveniency, but rather benefit from their existence or toleration in this country, as they are, in general, a sober, industrious, inoffensive and a loyal people; as a proof of which, the society of Fulnek subscribed 100*l.* to the voluntary contributions in spring 1798.

Their principal settlement in America is *Bethlehem*, in Pennsylvania, which was begun by Count Z. in 1741. Mr. Weld, in his “*Travels through the United States*,” gives an account of the Moravians there, honourable to their virtue and piety, and expressive of the good they have done.—“The Moravian missionaries,” says he, “have wrought a greater change on the minds of the Indians, than any others.” And after describing this settlement at Bethlehem, he observes, that “wherever the society has extended itself in America, the most happy consequences have re-

\* The Brethren have 6 regular settlements in Saxony, 4 in Silesia, 1 at Sarepta, near Astracan in Russian Asia, 1 at Neuired on the Rhine, 1 at Zeist in Holland, 1 at Christiansfeld in Denmark, 3 in England, 6 in North America, besides societies in various towns and villages in most Protestant countries.

sulted from it; good order and regularity have been conspicuous in the behaviour of the people of the neighbourhood, and arts and manufactures have been introduced into the country."—See also a Testimony of West India merchants to the Moravians, in the *Report of the Privy Council on the Slave Trade*.

EMINENT MEN AND AUTHORS PRO AND CON.

—The situation of persons belonging to this society has been highly unfavourable to their making a great figure in literary or theological pursuits; but that not a few of them have excelled in the less shining, but more solid and valuable accomplishments of unaffected piety and active charity, we can readily believe. Of these, in what other society can we find such honourable testimonies, such convincing proofs? Yet some of their eminent men are known to the literary world by their works,—such as,

*Count Zinzendorff*, by a variety of publications; *David Crantz*, by his valuable *History of Greenland*, and of the *Ancient and Modern Church of the Brethren*; *J. H. Loskiel*, by his *History of the Indian Missions*; *August Gottlieb Spangenberg*, by his *Exposition of Christian Doctrine*, and other works; *Risler*, by his *Select Narratives from the History of the Brethren*; translated from the German, in parts, by Mr. Charles J. Latrobe. Part 1st was published in 12mo in 1806. Crantz's *History of the Brethren*, and Spangenberg's *Christian Doctrine*, both of them also written in

German, were published in England by Mr. B. Latrobe, the former with additional notes, and the latter with a preface by the editor. And abroad they have produced several distinguished scholars both in mathematics and the learned languages, which are taught with great care in their schools.\*

While many, in various communions, have warmly approved their zeal and unwearied diligence in the cause of Christianity, † they have been assailed by many enemies, whose writings they do not contradict, but are satisfied to state their own plain case to the world, and to leave their cause with God. ‡—The books just noticed give the best account of their history, constitution, &c.

\* Bishop Gambold, author of the *Tragedy of Ignatius*, &c., and originally a clergyman of the Church of England, was a valuable minister and bishop of the *Brethren*; but no one contributed more to the welfare of the society, than the late Mr. Benjamin Latrobe; and Mr. C. J. Latrobe, who is one of their most distinguished living characters, seems to be a son worthy of such a father.

† See in particular, Dr. Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*, Mr. Wilberforce's *View*, p. 79, or 12mo p. 52, and Bishop Porteus's *Address to the West India Planters*.

‡ Dr. M'Laine, when speaking of this society in the last vol. of his *Edit. of Mosheim*, betrays any thing, I am sorry to say, but his usual candour and discernment.

## QUAKERS.

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NAMES.—The members of this society denominate themselves *Friends*, or the *Society of Friends*. The name of *Quakers* was imposed, not assumed;—it is expressive of *facts* rather than of *tenets*, and, though an epithet of reproach, seems to be stamped upon them indelibly. The appellation of *Friends*, they borrow from primitive and scriptural example, viz. “*Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends.*” 3 John v. 14. But when they address the king’s majesty, and even in their common transactions in the world, they very modestly denominate themselves the people called *Quakers*, by which name they are more generally known.

RISE, PROGRESS, &c.—Tenets somewhat similar to those of the Quakers appeared in the primitive church, among the *Ascobrutæ*, as we read in Theodoret; and again, about the latter end of

the 4th century, among the *Messalians*, or *Euchites*, who were for prayer without sacraments; but the people now known by that name, took their rise in England, about the middle of the 17th century, and rapidly found their way into other countries in Europe, and into the English settlements in North America.

They themselves tell us, that, in the 17th century, a number of men, dissatisfied with all the modes of religious worship then known in the world, withdrew from the communion of every visible church, to seek the Lord in retirement. Among these was their "Honourable Elder," George Fox, who, being "quickened by the immediate touches of divine love, could not satisfy his apprehensions of duty to God, without directing the people where to find the like consolation and instruction." In the course of his travels, he met with many "seeking persons," in circumstances similar to his own, and these "readily received his testimony." "He was one of the first of the Society of Friends who were imprisoned. He was confined at Nottingham in the year 1649 for having publicly opposed a preacher, on a point of doctrine; and in the following year, being brought before two justices in Derbyshire, one of them," (Justice Bennet) "scoffing at George Fox, for having bidden him, and those about him, to tremble at the word of the Lord, gave to our predecessors the name of *Quakers*; an appellation which soon became, and hath remained our most usual denomination: but they themselves adopted,

and have transmitted to us, the endearing appellation of *Friends*.”\*

They then give us a short account of their sufferings, and different settlements. They also in some measure vindicate Charles II. from the character of a persecutor, acknowledging, that though they suffered much during his reign, he sometimes discountenanced the severities of the legislature.† They even tell us that he exerted his authority to rescue their friends from the unprovoked and cruel persecutions which they met with in New England; and they speak with becoming gratitude of the different acts passed in their favour during the reigns of William and Mary, and George the First.

At the Restoration, a very severe act passed against them, the tendency of which was to compel them to take oaths; but at the Revolution, their scruples found relief, and their *affirmation* or asseveration has ever since, except, I believe, in criminal cases, to serve on juries, and hold places of profit under government, been considered as equivalent to an oath.

See Penn's *Brief Account of the Rise and Progress of the People called Quakers*; Sewel's *History of Ditto*; and Ruttly's *History of their Rise, &c. in Ireland*. See also the before-cited “*Sum-*

\* *Summary of the History, Doctrine, and Discipline of Friends*, 8th Edit. London, W. Philips.

† It also appears that Mr. Penn was a great favourite with James II.

*mary of the History, Doctrine, and Discipline of Friends, written at the desire of the Meeting for Sufferings in London.*” This pamphlet has lately been republished at the end of a curious work, entitled, “*A Refutation of some of the more modern Misrepresentations of the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers; with a Life of James Nayler; by Joseph Gurney Bevan.*”

**DISTINGUISHING TENETS.\***—“We agree with other professors of the Christian name, in the belief of one eternal God, the Creator and Preserver of the universe; and in Jesus Christ his Son, the Messiah, and Mediator of the New Covenant.†

“When we speak of the gracious display of the love of God to mankind, in the miraculous conception, birth, life, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Saviour, we prefer the use of such terms as we find in Scripture; and contented with that knowledge which divine wisdom hath seen meet to reveal, we attempt not to explain those mysteries which remain under the veil; nevertheless we acknowledge and assert the Divinity of Christ, who is the wisdom and power of God unto salvation.”‡

\* What follows under this and the following heads, distinguished by inverted commas, are chiefly extracts from the 8vo. Edit. (1804) of the *Summary* above mentioned, as made by a Committee of four learned *Friends* in London, who took the trouble of reviewing the author's MS. on the subject of this article.

† Heb. xii. 24.


‡ 1 Cor. i. 24.

“ To Christ alone we give the title of the Word of God,\* and not to the Scriptures, although we highly esteem these sacred writings, in subordination to the Spirit from which they were given forth;† and we hold, with the apostle Paul, that they are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”‡

“ We revere those most excellent precepts which are recorded in Scripture, to have been delivered by our great Lord, and we firmly believe that they are practicable, and binding on every Christian; and that in the life to come every man will be rewarded according to his works.§ And further, it is our belief, that, in order to enable mankind to put in practice these sacred precepts, many of which are contradictory to the unregenerate will of man, every man coming into the world,|| is endowed with a measure of the Light, Grace, or good Spirit of Christ; by which, as it is attended to, he

\* John i. 1.

† 2 Pet. i. 21.

‡ 2 Tim. iii. 15.  Their noticing the increasing attention in Friends, in various parts, to the frequent reading of the Holy Scriptures in their families, and also their warmly recommending this practice in the epistle from their yearly meeting held in London, in May, 1807, seem to shew that they do not carry their idea of the immediate teaching of the Spirit, so far as to supersede the use of the written word.

It might be well if they were also to adopt and recommend some external acknowledgment of God in their families, by domestic worship, and by asking his blessing, and giving him thanks at meals.

§ Mat. xvi. 27.

|| John i. 9.



is enabled to distinguish good from evil, and to correct the disorderly passions and corrupt propensities of his fallen nature, which mere reason is altogether insufficient to overcome. For all that belongs to man is fallible, and within the reach of temptation; but this divine grace, which comes by Him who hath overcome the world,\* is, to those who humbly and sincerely seek it, an all-sufficient and present help in time of need. By this, the snares of the enemy are detected, his allurements avoided, and deliverance is experienced through faith in its effectual operation: whereby the soul is translated out of the kingdom of darkness, and from under the power of Satan, into the marvellous light and kingdom of the Son of God.”

“ Being thus persuaded that man, without the Spirit of Christ inwardly revealed, can do nothing to the glory of God, or to effect his own salvation; we think this influence especially necessary to the performance of the highest act of which the human mind is capable, even the worship of the Father of lights and of spirits, in spirit and in truth: therefore we consider as obstructions to pure worship, all forms which divert the attention of the mind from the secret influence of this unction from the Holy One.† Yet although true worship is not confined to time and place, we think it incumbent on Christians to meet often together,‡ in testimony of their dependence on the heavenly Father, and for a renewal of their spiritual strength. Never-


\* John xvi. 33. † 1 John ii. 20, 27. ‡ Heb. x. 25.

theless, in the performance of worship, we dare not depend, for our acceptance with him, on a formal repetition of the words and experiences of others; but we believe it to be our duty to lay aside the activity of the imagination, and to wait in silence to have a true sight of our condition bestowed upon us; believing even a single sigh,\* arising from such a sense of our infirmities, and of the need we have of divine help, to be more acceptable to God, than any performances, however specious, which originate in the will of man."

"From what has been said respecting worship, it follows that the ministry we approve must have its origin from the same source; for that which is needful for a man's own direction, and for his acceptance with God, must be eminently so to enable him to be helpful to others. Accordingly, we believe that the renewed assistance of the light and power of Christ is indispensably necessary for all true ministry; and that this holy influence is not at our command, or to be procured by study, but is the free gift of God to chosen and devoted servants.—Hence arises our testimony against preaching for hire, in contradiction to Christ's positive command, 'Freely ye have received, freely give;'<sup>†</sup> and hence our conscientious refusal to support such ministry, by tithes or other means."<sup>‡</sup>


\* Rom. viii. 26.

† Mat. x. 8.

‡  Rather than pay tithes, the Quakers will suffer their property to be distrained, and even their persons imprisoned.

“As we dare not encourage any ministry, but that which we believe to spring from the influence of the Holy Spirit, so neither dare we attempt to restrain this ministry to persons of any condition in life, or to the male sex alone; but as male and female are one in Christ, we hold it proper that such of the female sex as we believe to be endued with a right qualification for the ministry, should exercise their gifts for the general edification of the church; and this liberty we esteem a peculiar mark of the gospel dispensation, as foretold by the prophet Joel,\* and noticed by the apostle Peter.”†

“There are two ceremonies in use among most professors of the Christian name, Water-Baptism, and what is termed the Lord’s Supper. The first of these is generally esteemed the essential means of initiation into the church of Christ; and the latter, of maintaining communion with him. But as we have been convinced, that nothing short of his redeeming power, inwardly revealed, can set the soul free from the thralldom of sin; by this power alone we believe salvation to be effected. We hold that as there is one Lord and one faith,‡ so his baptism is one, in nature and operation; that nothing short of it can make us living members of his mystical body; and that the baptism with water, administered by his fore-runner John, belonged, as

\* Joel ii. 28, 29. † Acts ii. 16 to 18.  See above, p. 134, note.—Why not “abide literally” by St. Paul’s positive injunction, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, as well as by our Lord’s in St. Matth. v. 34.?

‡ Eph. iv. 5.

the latter confessed, to an inferior and decreasing dispensation.\*\*\*

“ With respect to the other rite, we believe that communion between Christ and his church is not maintained by that, or by any other external performance, but only by a real participation of his divine nature† through faith; that this is the supper alluded to in the Revelation, “ Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me;”‡ and that where the substance is attained, it is unnecessary to attend to the shadow;§ which doth not confer grace, and concerning which, opinions so different, and animosities so violent, have arisen.”

“ Now, as we thus believe that the grace of God, which comes by Jesus Christ, is alone sufficient for salvation, we can neither admit that it is conferred on a few only, whilst others are left without it; nor, thus asserting its universality, can we limit its operation to a partial cleansing of the soul from sin, even in this life. We entertain worthier notions both of the power and goodness of our heavenly Father, and believe that he doth

\* John iii. 30. † Socinus wrote a tract on this question, “ An homini Christiano aquæ baptismo carere liceat ?” and he determined it in the affirmative.

† 2 Pet. i. 4. ‡ Rev. iii. 20.


§ On this head, perhaps Col. ii. 16, 17, applied to the Lord's Supper, might express their mind.

vouchsafe to assist the obedient to experience a total surrender of the natural will to the guidance of his pure unerring Spirit; through whose renewed assistance they are enabled to bring forth fruits unto holiness, and to stand perfect in their present rank.”\*

“There are not many of our tenets more generally known than our testimony against oaths, and against war. With respect to the former of these, we abide literally by Christ’s positive injunction, delivered in his sermon on the mount, “Swear not at all.”† From the same sacred collection of the most excellent precepts of moral and religious duty, from the example of our Lord himself,‡ and from the correspondent convictions of his Spirit in our hearts, we are confirmed in the belief that wars and fightings are, in their origin and effects, utterly repugnant to the gospel; which still breathes peace and good-will to men.§ We also are clearly of the judgment, that if the benevolence of the gospel were generally prevalent in the minds of men, it would effectually prevent them from oppressing, much more from enslaving, their brethren (of whatever colour or complexion,) for

\* Mat. v. 48. Eph. iv. 13. Col. iv. 12. † Mat. v. 34.


‡ Mat. v. 39, 44, &c.; xxvi. 52, 53. Luke xxii. 51. John xviii. 11.

§  Yet we are told, that during the contest with America, many of the Quakers of Pennsylvania actually bore arms against their mother-country; and that one of them, named *Miffin*, attained, and long held the rank of general: for which, however, they were disowned by their brethren.

whom, as for themselves, Christ died; and would even influence their conduct in their treatment of the brute creation; which would no longer groan, the victims of their avarice, or of their false ideas of pleasure.”

“ Some of our tenets have, in former times, as hath been shown, subjected our Friends to much suffering from Government; though to the salutary purposes of Government, our principles are a security. They inculcate submission to the laws, in all cases wherein conscience is not violated. But we hold, that as Christ’s kingdom is not of this world, it is not the business of the civil magistrate to interfere in matters of religion; but to maintain the external peace and good order of the community. We therefore think persecution, even in the smallest degree, unwarrantable. We are careful in requiring our members not to be concerned in illicit trade, nor in any manner to defraud the revenue.”

“ It is well known that the Society, from its first appearance, has disused those names of the months and days, which having been given in honour of the heroes or false gods of the heathen, originated in their flattery or superstition; and also the custom of speaking to a single person in the plural number, as having likewise arisen from motives of adulation.\* Compliments, superfluity of ap-

\*  Speaking of this custom, Fox says, “When the Lord sent me forth into the world, he forbade me to put off

parel, of furniture,\* and of provision for the table, outward shows of rejoicing and mourning, and the observation of days and times, we esteem to be incompatible with the simplicity of a Christian life; and public diversions, gaming, and other vain amusements of the world, we cannot but condemn. They are a waste of that time which is given us for nobler purposes; and divert the attention of the mind from the sober duties of life, and from the reproofs of instruction, by which we are guided to an everlasting inheritance.”


“To conclude, although we have exhibited the several tenets which distinguish our religious society, as objects of our belief; yet we are sensible that a true and living faith is not produced in the mind of man by his own effort; but is the free gift of God† in Christ Jesus, nourished and in-

my hat to any, and I was required to *thee* and *thou*, all men and women.”—*Journal*, p. 24.

George Fox remained covered in Cromwell's presence; and even now, in waiting on the king, no one in the deputation ever takes off his hat. Those, however, who are in waiting, take them off the Quakers' heads before they enter the room where the king receives them.

Even in public worship, the men sit with their hats on; but when any one rises to address the assembly, he uncovers his head, and no one wears his hat during the time of prayer.

With the Presbyterians and others, they also reject the title of *Saint*, as applied to the apostles, &c.

\*  Plainness is so much consulted by them in articles of furniture, that pictures, prints, or drawings, are seldom admitted into their apartments.

† Eph. ii. 8.

creased by the progressive operation of his Spirit in our hearts, and our proportionate obedience.\* Therefore, although for the preservation of the testimonies given us to bear, and for the peace and good order of the Society, we deem it necessary that those who are admitted into membership with us should be previously convinced of those doctrines which we esteem essential; yet we require no formal subscription to any articles, either as a condition of membership, or a qualification for the service of the church. We prefer judging of men by their fruits, and depending on the aid of Him, who, by his prophet, hath promised to be “for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment.”† Without this, there is a danger of receiving numbers into outward communion without any addition to that spiritual sheep-fold, whereof our blessed Lord declared himself to be both the door and the shepherd;‡ that is, such as know his voice, and follow him in the paths of obedience.”

Their system may be found laid down in fifteen Theses, by Mr. Robert Barclay, one of the most distinguished members of their communion, in an elegant and well-written *Apology*, addressed to King Charles the Second. See also Helton’s *Defence of Barclay’s Apology*. And for their Scripture proofs, and reasoning on the subject of the two sacraments, the reader is referred to a *Dis-*

\* John vii. 17. † Isaiah xxviii. 6. ‡ John x. 7, 11.



*sertation on Christian Baptism, Christian Communion, &c.* by Joseph Phipps.

They doubtless disregard some things which others deem essentials of the gospel, as water-baptism, and the use of the bread and wine in the communion, and they are almost the only modern sect, (except some mystics, who make the whole of religion to consist of contemplative love) that rejects these two sacraments of the church; and hence, some are unwilling to rank them in the number of Christians. But Dr. Knox, speaking of them, observes, "I wish any thing I could say, (though I wish without hope) could prevail with them to take the outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace. I lament what appears to me to be their mistake; but far be it from any Christian to say, that they are cut off by it from the body of Christ, while they exhibit proofs in other respects of a Christian faith, and a Christian life."\*

With this divine, let us judge of the weakness of our brethren, in the spirit of charity; and not pronounce, in the harsh language of some, in regard to the members of this society; let us rather use all proper and becoming means, to lead them "into the way of truth," and let us pray for them, and for all those that we may conceive to be in error, that their eyes may be illuminated by the "*true light*, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

\* *On the Sacrament*, p. 256.

WORSHIP, CEREMONIES, AND DISCIPLINE.—They have places of worship, where they regularly assemble on Sundays, and generally once in the week besides; though sometimes without vocal prayer, or any religious or practical exhortations. According to them, all true and acceptable worship is offered by the inward and immediate moving of the Spirit. They do not, however, plead for entirely silent meetings, but only for a retired waiting for the divine aid, which alone qualifies to pray or preach.\* They apprehend it their duty to be diligent in assembling themselves together for the worship of God; when such as are duly prepared by being gathered into a composed awful frame of mind, are enabled, under the influence of divine grace, to worship in solemn silence; or, if moved thereto, to pray or preach as the Spirit giveth them utterance.†

\* It does not follow, says Mr. Clarkson, “because nothing is said, that God is not worshipped. The Quakers, on the other hand, contend, that these silent meetings form the sublimest part of their worship. The soul, they say, can have intercourse with God; it can feel refreshment, joy, and comfort in him; it can praise and adore him, and all this, without the intervention of a word.” *Portraiture of Quakerism.*

To this work the reader is referred for much information on the general subject of this article.—Mr. C., who seems to be a man of the most benevolent disposition and of many virtues, was formerly a clergyman of the Church of England; but is now, I understand, become a Quaker: a change, which, if we may be allowed to judge from its being likely to meet with the approbation of all his *Friends*, is no doubt much for the better.

† All instrumental music in the worship of God, and


Their ceremonies are few and simple.

“ In the practice of discipline, we think it indispensable,” say they,\* “ that the order recommended by Christ himself be invariably observed. Mat. xviii. 15—17. To effect the salutary purposes of discipline, meetings were appointed at an early period of the society, which, from the times of their being held, were called Quarterly-meetings. It was afterwards found expedient to divide the districts of those meetings, and to meet more frequently; from whence arose Monthly-meetings, subordinate to those held quarterly. At length, in 1669 a Yearly-meeting was established, to superintend, assist, and provide rules for the whole; previously to which, general meetings had been occasionally held.”

“ A Monthly-meeting is usually composed of several particular congregations, situated within a convenient distance from each other. Its business is to provide for the subsistence of the poor,† and for the education of their offspring; to judge of the

even the singing of psalms and hymns, which most Christians deem a scriptural and profitable, as well as a highly delightful part of worship, the members of this Society entirely reject.

\* In the *Summary* before cited.

†  Their poor require no parish relief. They are better taken care of than those of almost any other denomination; and one reason of this, as far as regards the female poor, may be, as Mrs. H. More observes, because they are under the immediate inspection of the women.

sincerity and fitness of persons appearing to be convinced of the religious principles of the Society, and desiring to be admitted into membership; to excite due attention to the discharge of religious and moral duty; and to deal with disorderly members. Monthly-meetings also grant to such of their members as remove into other Monthly-meetings, certificates of their membership and conduct; without which they cannot gain membership in such meetings. Each Monthly-meeting is required to appoint certain persons, under the name of overseers, who are to take care that the rules of our discipline be put in practice; and when any case of complaint, or disorderly conduct, comes to their knowledge, to see that private admonition, agreeably to the gospel rule before-mentioned, be given, previously to its being laid before the Monthly-meeting."

"When a case is introduced, it is usual for a small committee to be appointed, to visit the offender, to endeavour to convince him of his error, and induce him to forsake and condemn it. If they succeed, the person is by minute declared to have made satisfaction for the offence; if not, he is disowned as a member of the Society."

"In disputes between individuals, it has long been the decided judgment of the Society, that its members should not sue each other at law. It therefore enjoins all to end their differences by speedy and impartial arbitration, agreeably to rules laid down. If any refuse to adopt this mode,


or, having adopted it, to submit to the award, it is the direction of the Yearly-meeting that such be disowned.”

“To Monthly-meetings also belongs the allowing of marriages; for our society hath always scrupled to acknowledge the exclusive authority of the priests in the solemnisation of marriage. Those who intend to marry, appear together, and propose their intentions to the Monthly-meeting; and if not attended by their parents or guardians, produce a written certificate of their consent, signed in the presence of witnesses. The meeting then appoints a committee to inquire whether they be clear of other engagements respecting marriage; and if at a subsequent meeting no objections be reported, they have the meeting’s consent to solemnise their intended marriage. This is done in a public meeting for worship, towards the close whereof the parties stand up, and solemnly take each other for husband and wife. A certificate of the proceedings is then publicly read, and signed by the parties, and afterwards by the relations and others, as witnesses. Of such marriages the Monthly-meeting keeps a record; as also of the births and burials of its members. A certificate of the date, of the name of the infant, and of its parents, signed by those present at the birth, is the subject of one of these last mentioned records; and an order for the interment, countersigned by the grave-maker, of the other. The naming of children is without ceremony. Burials are also conducted in a simple manner. The body, followed by the relations and

friends, is sometimes, previously to interment, carried to a meeting; and at the grave a pause is generally made: on both which occasions it frequently falls out, that one or more friends present have somewhat to express for the edification of those who attend; but no religious rite is considered as an essential part of burial.\*

“Several Monthly-meetings compose a Quarterly-meeting. At the Quarterly-meeting are produced written answers from the Monthly-meetings, to certain queries respecting the conduct of their members, and the meeting’s care over them. The accounts thus received, are digested into one, which is sent, also in the form of answers to queries, by representatives, to the Yearly-meeting. Appeals from the judgment of Monthly-meetings, are brought to the Quarterly-meetings; whose business also it is to assist in any difficult case, or where remissness appears in the care of the Monthly-meetings over the individuals who compose them.”

“There are seven Yearly-meetings, viz. 1, in London,\* to which come representatives from

\*  Held at their meeting-house in *Houndsditch*, London. The Yearly-meeting,—2. above, For *New England*, is held at *Newport*, Rhode Island, and consists of five Quarterly-meetings.—3. For the state of *New York*, is held at New York, and consists also of five Quarterly-meetings.—4. For parts of *Pennsylvania*, *New Jersey*, *Delaware*, and the Eastern parts of *Maryland*, is held at *Philadelphia*, and consists of eleven Quarterly-meetings.—5. For the Western shore of *Maryland*, and parts of *Pennsylvania*, *Virginia*, and

Great Britain and Ireland; 2, New England; 3, New-York; 4, Pennsylvania and New Jersey; 5, Maryland; 6, Virginia; 7, The Carolinas and Georgia.”

“The Yearly-meeting has the general superintendance of the Society in the country in which it is established; and therefore, as the accounts which it receives discover the state of inferior meetings, as particular exigencies require, or as the meeting is impressed with a sense of duty, it gives forth its advice, makes such regulations as appear to be requisite, or excites to the observance of those already made; and sometimes appoints committees to visit those Quarterly-meetings which appear to be in need of immediate advice. Appeals from the judgment of Quarterly-meetings are here finally determined; and a brotherly correspondence, by epistles, is maintained with other Yearly-meetings.”

“In this place it is proper to add, that, as we believe women may be rightly called to the work of the ministry, we also think, that to them belongs a share in the support of our Christian discipline; and that some parts of it, wherein their own sex is concerned, devolve on them with peculiar propriety. Accordingly, they have Monthly, Quarterly,

*Ohio*, is held at *Baltimore*, and consists of four Quarterly-meetings.—6. For the Southern parts of *Virginia*, is held alternately at *Wainoak* and *Black Water*, and consists of two Quarterly-meetings.—7. For *North* and *South Carolina*, *Georgia*, and *Tennessee*, is held alternately at *Little-River* and *New Garden*, and consists of seven Quarterly-meetings.

and Yearly Meetings of their own sex, held at the same time with those of the men; but separately, and without the power of making rules; and it may be remarked, that during the persecutions, which formerly occasioned the imprisonment of so many of the men, the care of the poor often fell on the women, and was by them satisfactorily administered."

"In order that those who are in the situation of ministers may have the tender sympathy and counsel of those of either sex, who by their experience in the work of religion, are qualified for that service, the Monthly-meetings are advised to select such, under the denomination of elders. These, and ministers approved by their Monthly-meetings,\* have meetings peculiar to themselves, called Meetings of Ministers and Elders; in which they have an opportunity of exciting each other to a discharge of their several duties, and of extending advice to those who may appear to be weak, without any needless exposure. Such meetings are generally held in the compass of each Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meeting. They are conducted by rules prescribed by the


\* "Those who believe themselves required to speak in meetings for worship, are not immediately acknowledged as ministers by their Monthly-meetings; but time is taken for judgment, that the meeting may be satisfied of their call and qualification. It will also sometimes happen, that such as are not approved, will obtrude themselves as ministers, to the grief of their brethren; but much forbearance is used towards these, before the disapprobation of the meeting is publicly testified."



Yearly-meeting, and have no authority to make any alteration or addition to them. The members of them unite with their brethren in the meetings for discipline, and are equally accountable to the latter for their conduct.”

“It is to a meeting of this kind in London, called the Second-day’s\* Morning-meeting, that the revisal of manuscripts concerning our principles, previously to publication, is intrusted by the Yearly-meeting held in London; and also the granting, in the intervals of the Yearly-meeting, of certificates of approbation to such ministers as are concerned to travel in the work of the ministry in foreign parts; in addition to those granted by their Monthly and Quarterly Meetings. When a visit of this kind doth not extend beyond Great Britain, a certificate from the Monthly-meeting of which the minister is a member, is sufficient; if to Ireland, the concurrence of the Quarterly-meeting is also required. Regulations of similar tendency obtain in other Yearly-meetings.”

“The Yearly-meeting of London, in the year 1675, appointed a meeting to be held in that city, for the purpose of advising and assisting in cases of suffering for conscience sake, which hath continued with great use to the Society to this day. It is composed of Friends, under the name of correspondents, chosen by the several Quarterly-meetings, and who reside in or near the city.

\*  *i. e.* Monday.—Instead of the usual names of the days and months, the Quakers call them the *first, second, third, &c.*

The same meetings also appoint members of their own in the country as correspondents, who are to join their brethren in London on emergency. The names of all these correspondents, previously to their being recorded, are submitted to the approbation of the Yearly-meeting. Such men as are approved ministers are also members of this meeting, which is called the *Meeting for Sufferings*; a name arising from its original purpose, and which is not yet become entirely obsolete.”

“The Yearly-meeting has intrusted the Meeting for Sufferings with the care of printing and distributing books, and with the management of its stock;\* and considered as a standing committee of the Yearly-meeting, it hath a general care of whatever may rise, during the intervals of that meeting, affecting the society, and requiring immediate attention; particularly of those circumstances which may occasion an application to Government.”

“There is not in any of the meetings which have been mentioned, any president, as we believe that divine Wisdom alone ought to preside; nor hath any member a right to claim pre-eminence over the rest. The office of clerk, with a few exceptions, is undertaken voluntarily by some

\* “This is an occasional voluntary contribution, expended in printing books,—salary of a clerk for keeping records,—the passage of ministers who visit their brethren beyond sea,—and some small incidental charges; but not, as has been falsely supposed, the reimbursement of those who suffer distress for tithes and other demands with which they scruple to comply.”

member; as is also the keeping of the records. Where these are very voluminous, and require a house for their deposit (as is the case in London, where the general records of the Society in Great Britain are kept), a clerk is hired to have the care of them; but, except a few clerks of this kind, and persons who have the care of meeting-houses, none receive any stipend or gratuity for their services in our religious Society."

COUNTRIES WHERE FOUND, EMINENT MEN, AND WRITERS, PRO ET CONTRA.—The Quakers are to be found chiefly in Great Britain\* and Ireland, and in North America. In 1681, King Charles the Second granted William Penn, in lieu of arrears due to his father Admiral Penn, a large tract of land in North America, since called Pennsylvania after his name; and it is remarkable, that all the settlements of the Europeans in America, except the Quaker settlement of Pennsylvania, were made by force of arms, with very little regard to any prior title in the natives. But Mr. Penn did not think his power from the king a sufficient title to the country, and therefore assembled the *Sachems*, or princes of it, and purchased from them the extent of land that he wanted; and when the

\* They have a respectable seminary or hospital at *Ackworth*, in Yorkshire, where about 180 boys, and 120 girls, are educated. Their number in England and Wales has been reckoned at about 50,000, but it is apprehended that this is much too high a computation. In Scotland they do not much exceed 300.

Quakers desire to extend their settlements, they purchase new lands of the *Sachems*, never taking any thing from them by force. Hence, from this their conduct towards them, they are respected most highly by the savage Indians to the present day; and I believe it is a fact, that the Indians bordering on Pennsylvania will enter into no treaty, without first taking the opinion of the Quakers.\*

How much to be desired is it that the Quakers would adopt our religious opinions, and that both we and all professing Christians would imitate this, and some other parts of their practice!

None of their members have been more eminent than this founder and legislator of the settlement of Pennsylvania. Mr. P. had the *success* of a conqueror in establishing and defending his colony amongst savage tribes, without ever drawing the sword; the goodness of the most benevolent rulers, in treating his subjects as his own children, and the tenderness of an universal parent, who opened his arms to all mankind, without distinction of sect or party. In his republic, it was not the religious creed, but personal merit, that entitled every member of society to the protection and emolument of the state. This part of his character will, however, no doubt, be viewed in a different light by different people.

\* *Onas* is the name which the Indians gave to William Penn. They consider the *Friends*, (whom they call *Brother's onas*') as William Penn's people: but the appellation has been generally considered as their name for the governor of Pennsylvania.

“ He also wrote several pieces; among others, “ *The Sandy Foundation Shaken*, &c., and “ *Immacency with her open Face* ;” in which last he vindicated himself from the charge of Socinianism, which had been brought against him: and he is thought in general to be a perspicuous writer.

Their great apologist, *Mr. Barclay*, may be ranked next after *Mr. Penn*, and as a writer should perhaps stand before him. Besides his *Apology*, already mentioned, and some other works, *Mr. B.* published, in 1670, a *Defence* of his principles, and in 1673, a *Catechetical Discourse*, or system of faith, according to the opinions of his Society. Nor did he benefit it by his writings only, but also travelled through various countries, particularly Germany and Holland, to spread his principles. He spent the latter part of his life on his estate at Ury, near Stonehaven, in Scotland, where he died in 1690.

Among various other respectable men, the Quakers have to rank in the list of their members, the great *Dr. Fothergill*, the principal promoter of their establishment for the education of children at Ackworth; and his brother, *Mr. Samuel F.*, who was one of their most eminent preachers, and travelled over Great Britain, Ireland, and North America.

The novelty of the Quakers' tenets, and their other peculiarities, soon brought upon them much opposition, and from various quarters. See *Brown's*

“ *Quakerism the Path Way to Paganism,*” (1678,) and the second volume of Mr. C. Leslie’s works. Voltaire, in his *Letters on the English Nation*, has some curious remarks on them; but in certain particulars they deem themselves calumniated “ by that satirical writer, as well as by some other of their opponents.”

Some have said that they are a species of *Deists*, exalting their natural light above the scripture, which some of them have called a dead letter;\* others have deemed them a kind of *enthusiasts*, violently enslaved by their impulses and feelings; whilst a third class have considered them, notwithstanding their professions respecting the spirit, as *worldly minded*, eargerly intent on the acquisition of property, and thus commanding the good things of this present world.

Their sentiments are doubtless peculiar, as are also their manners; yet we have much reason to believe, that in general they are sincere in their professions, and, with some exceptions, steadily governed by the prospects of another world. So far, at least, are they from being *Deists*, that they are one of the few Christian societies in Britain which support their discipline in such a manner as to disown those members who by word or or writing profess or propagate deistical principles;

\* Meaning that they are so to the natural, unregenerate man; or when not applied to the state of the reader, by the spirit which gave them forth.

when, after due labour, such cannot be brought to acknowledge their error.

Mr. Leslie's heavy charges against them, in his "*Snake in the Grass*," were replied to in 1699, by Joseph Wyeth, in a tract, entitled "*A Switch for the Snake*." Brown was answered by Barclay, in his "*Apology Vindicated*;" and Voltaire's remarks were animadverted on by Josiah Martin, in a printed *Letter* to the author.

In the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, under the article *Quakers*, may be seen a curious letter from George Fox, in answer to Oliver Cromwell, who had required him to promise not to disturb his government, as then established. But the authenticity of this letter is questioned by J. G. Bevan, in his "*Refutation of some of the more modern Misrepresentations of the Society of Friends*;" who gives his reason at length for so doing, and also meets some other charges of Mr. Leslie, which are brought forward in the *Encyclopædia*.

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.—The Quakers have burying grounds distinct from those of other denominations.—Refusing to pay tithes, they suffer the loss of their goods and of their liberty, rather than comply with the demand, and their losses are emphatically termed *sufferings*. Many have endured long imprisonments on that account. In the century before last they were exposed, in common with the Nonconformists, to severe persecutions. Even the famous William Penn was tried at the Old Baily; when he pleaded his own cause,

and the trial, to be found in his works, is highly honourable to his legal knowledge and his integrity. His treaty with the Indians, on founding his settlement in Pennsylvania, has formed an admirable subject for the pencil, and reflects immortal honour on his memory.

With regard to the resurrection of the body, they appear desirous, for the most part, of confining themselves to the words of scripture, a deviation from which, they think, has often given rise to fruitless controversies. Barclay, in his *Confession, and Catechism*, uses the words of scripture on the subject, conformably to his general plan in these works. Sewel, in his *History of the Society*, expresses himself decidedly in behalf of a resurrection.

With respect to the divinity of Christ, they have been very explicit, as may be seen by the following extracts from Penn and Barclay: "He that is the Everlasting Wisdom, the Divine Power, the true Light, the only Saviour, the creating Word of all things (whether visible or invisible), and their Upholder by his own power, is without contradiction God; but all these qualifications and divine properties are by the concurrent testimonies of scripture ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, without a scruple, I call and believe him really to be the mighty God." Penn's *Works*, vol. 1. p. 268, folio edit.—" [Christ] having been with God from all eternity, being himself God, and also in time partaking of the nature of man, through him is the goodness and love of God conveyed to mankind, and by him again man



receiveth and partaketh of these mercies." Barclay's *Apology*, prop. 2. sect. 5.—Further proof of this is given in a late pamphlet, by Henry Tuke, entitled, "*The Faith of the People called Quakers in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, set forth in various Extracts from their Writings,*" (London 1801, W. Phillips): and also in a later publication by the same author, under the title of "*The principles of religion as professed by the Society of Christians usually called Quakers; written for the instruction of their youth, and the information of strangers.*" (London, 1805. Phillips and Fardon.)

A considerable number of members of this Society in Ireland, who appeared to derogate from the authority of the scriptures, and to incline to Socinian or Deistical notions, have either voluntarily quitted the society, or been disowned by it. A minister of the female sex in America, who had adopted and promoted tenets of similar tendency, was, a few years ago, silenced, and afterwards disowned.

Dr. Toulmin in his new edition of Neale's *History of the Puritans*, has taken great pains to give the public just ideas of the Quakers, which does honour to his impartiality. In addition to the works already noticed, see also Dr. A. Rees's improved edition of Chambers's *Cyclopædia*, on the subject. But Mr. Barclay's *Apology*, which has gone through many editions both at home and abroad, is generally, if not universally, received among them, as the "standard of their doctrine, and the test of their orthodoxy."

We may well envy the mild creed, and universal charity, or fraternal love, of the Quakers, while we must allow with a sigh, that a nation of Quakers could not exist, except all nations were of the same persuasion. To this, however, it has been said by one of their writers, that any nation actually possessing and practising Christian principles, may be contented with the protection of Heaven, which can always find means to protect what it brings to pass.\*

However few of other denominations may be disposed to think well of their religious opinions,

\* The Menonites in Holland, it seems, maintained several principles which now distinguish the members of this Society, as the unlawfulness of oaths, and of bearing arms; and the principles on which they were tolerated by the States, may be learned from a conversation, which the Dutch ambassador Van Beuning, held with the celebrated M. de Turenne. "Why should you wish," said the ambassador, "that we should not tolerate them? They are the best and most convenient people in the world. They never aspire to posts of honour, nor rival us in glory. One could wish that every where, half the inhabitants would decline public offices, there would be more chance for the other half. We have no fear from a sect which maintains the unlawfulness of bearing arms. The Menonites pay their taxes, and with the money we levy troops, who do us more service than they would. They apply themselves to business, and enrich the state by their industry, without injuring it by the expense and contagion of their dissipations. But they refuse to take an oath! Terrible crime! They are as much bound by their word and promise as if they swore." Bayle, in Messrs Bogue and Bennet's *History of the Dissenters*, vol. i. p. 147, 8. note.

or of many of their peculiar customs, it cannot be denied that the Quakers, as members of society, are a very respectable body; and that, though they have a church (if that term may be used in regard to their society), not only without sacraments, but even without a priesthood, and a government without a head, they are perhaps the best organised and most unanimous religious society in the world. Their benevolence, moral rectitude, and commercial punctuality have excited, and long secured to them, very general esteem; and it has been well observed, that in the multitudes that compose the vast legion of vagrants and street beggars, not a single Quaker can be found.

They object to the common mode of solemnising marriage, as, say they, from Genesis to Revelation, no record is to be found of marriage performed by a priest. They consider it as a civil contract, and they quote William Penn, who says, that “it was the unanimous sense of *Friends*, that joining in marriage was the work of the Lord only.” Hence, of all the sects in England, they are indulged with the peculiar privilege of being married in their own way, and in their own places of worship. What that particular way, or what the form of the vows, or rather *promises*, which they then make, may be, I am not able to say: we are notwithstanding led to suppose that they are seldom broken; for it is a fact, and to their credit be it spoken, that we never hear of adultery or divorce among them.

Other indulgences have from time to time been granted by the legislature to this peaceful people, in return for those meek qualities which they are found to possess. And in particular a bill was passed in parliament in 1722, for taking out of their solemn affirmation the words "In the presence of Almighty God." But why they should refuse to acknowledge themselves, on legal occasions, *as in the presence of Almighty God*, it is not easy to conjecture. The believer in scripture can have no well founded objection to acknowledge, at any time, the omnipresence of God; and from the language of scripture it may be proved, as well as from the practice of holy men, even of our blessed Saviour himself, that "an oath for confirmation is the end of all strife."—"I adjure thee," said the High Priest to our Lord, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God."—Now, if language has any force, if example, or argument, or scripture have any weight, when opposed to the strong prejudices of mankind, this passage ought surely to produce full conviction.\*

Of all sects they have shewn themselves the least desirous of making converts to their peculiar

\* The Quakers admit the lawfulness of *judicial* swearing before a magistrate under the Law, but consider it as unlawful under the Gospel; and, in defence of their doctrine on this head, they refer us to the 15th Thesis of Barclay's *Apology*;—the 12th Sect. of Besse's *Defence of Quakerism*, and the 2d vol. of Isaac Pennington's *Works*, p 163, 3d edit.

opinions; but in their attempts to cultivate the large, and inexhaustible field of Christian benevolence, they have lately formed and engaged in a plan for civilising the Indians of North America, which promises to have a happy effect on that barbarous and much-neglected people, and will doubtless prepare them for the reception of the Gospel, an object which, I can readily believe, the Friends have ultimately in view.

A committee was appointed in 1795, by the yearly meeting of Friends of *Pennsylvania, New Jersey, &c.*, for promoting the Improvement and gradual Civilisation of the Indian Natives. Another committee, distinct from the former, but having the very same object in view, has also been appointed by the yearly meeting held at *Baltimore in Maryland*; and from the accounts of their proceedings, which have as yet reached this country, it would appear that, notwithstanding the great difficulties which they have had to encounter, and the very heavy expense with which their efforts are unavoidably attended, their success has hitherto been such as to encourage them to proceed.\*

The nations to which the Philadelphia committee has chiefly directed its attention are the *Seneca Indians*,† residing near the *Allegheny* and *Cattara-*

\* From six to ten thousand pounds have already been contributed towards this labour of love, and transmitted to America, by the Friends in this country.

† The *Oneidas* and *Senecas* are part of an ancient league called the *Five Nations*, who inhabited the country N. and N. E. of New York, and bordering upon Canada.

*gues* rivers, mostly within the state of Pennsylvania, south-eastward of Lake Erie, and at the distance of about 250 or 300 miles N. W. of Philadelphia.—Those that have engaged the attention of the *Baltimore* committee lie in general farther west, and are situated in that vast district which is comprehended between the rivers Ohio and Mississippi, and bounded to the north by the lakes *Superior*, *Huron*, and *Erie*. Lake *Michigan* penetrates this district, and may be said to be wholly within it. It has been called the *North-Western Territory*; and was not long ago the scene of an Indian war.

The well-directed efforts of these committees have at length vindicated the Indian character from the reproach of indolence, “and shewn that their long continued barbarism has, since they were placed withing the reach of Europeans, been chargeable less on their own indolence or prejudices, than on those of their civilised neighbours.”\* And, added to the cultivation of the earth, the first step in the view of the Friends, towards many other *temporal* advantages to be derived to those nations from civil life, may “the promotion of this concern, which has thus far evidently prospered, *prepare for*, and prove the means,

\* *Report of the African Institution*, (July 1807, p. 30.) whose benevolent exertions, with a view to the civilisation of the benighted and much-injured Africans, seem to have been suggested by these attempts of the Friends for the happiness of the American Indians. At least, their success in America holds forth much encouragement to the worthy members of the African Institution to plan, to labour, and to persevere.

under the DIVINE BLESSING, through which may finally spread and prevail among these our fellow men, that LIGHT and KNOWLEDGE, which so eminently distinguish the true CHRISTIAN!"\*

\* *Brief Account of the Proceedings of the Committee appointed by the Yearly Meeting of Friends held in Baltimore for promoting the Improvement and Civilisation of Indian Natives*, p. 41, Baltimore printed, but reprinted London, 1806, and sold, together with a Brief Account of the Proceedings of the *Philadelphia Committee*, by Phillips and Fardon, George Yard, Lombard Street.

See also some information *relative to the Progress of Civilisation in the Indian Settlements*, promoted by the latter Committee, in the *Pocket Book for the use of Friends*, for the year 1808.

## HUTCHINSONIANS.

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### NAME AND HISTORY OF THE FOUNDER.—

The denomination of Christians, or religious party that bears this name, are the followers of John Hutchinson, Esq., a learned and respectable layman, who was born at *Spennythorn*,\* in Yorkshire, in 1674. Mr. H. received a private education; which, however, was liberal and excellent: and at the age of 19, he became steward to a gentleman; in which capacity he afterwards served the Duke of Somerset.

Having a great turn for natural history, and mineralogy, he improved the opportunities which his station in life, of having the superintendency of several coal and tin mines, gave him, and made a large collection of fossils, which he put into the hands of Dr. Woodward the physician, with observations for him to digest and publish.\* The Doctor, however, is said to have deceived Mr. H. with fair promises, and never to have begun the work,

\* This large and noble collection was afterwards bequeathed by Dr. Woodward to the university of Cambridge.



which induced him to rely on his own pen. He therefore quitted the Duke's service, who, being at that time Master of the Horse to King George I. made him his riding surveyor, a sinecure place, worth 200*l.* a year, with a good house in the Meuse. The Duke also gave him the next presentation to the living of Sutton, in Sussex, which Mr. H. bestowed on his friend Mr. Julius Bate, a zealous defender of his doctrines.

In 1724, he published the first part of that curious work, his "*Moses's Principia*," in which he ridiculed Dr. Woodward's *Natural History of the Earth*, and exploded the doctrine of gravitation established in Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*.—In the second part of this work, published in 1727, he maintained, in opposition to the Newtonian system, that a *plenum* was the principle of Scripture philosophy. In this work he also intimated, that the idea of the Trinity was to be taken from the grand agents in the natural system, *fire, light, and spirit*; which, it is said, so forcibly struck Dr. Clarke, that he requested to have an interview with Mr. H. on the subject, but the proposal was declined.—It appears that Mr. H. had a considerable knowledge of Mechanics; for, in 1712, he invented a time-keeper for the discovery of the longitude, which was approved by Sir I. Newton; and Mr. Whiston, in one of his tracts, has borne respectable testimony to his abilities.

From the time that he published the second part of his *Principia*, he continued to publish a

volume every year or two, till his death; and a correct and elegant edition of his works, including the MSS. which he left unpublished, were published in 1748, in 12 vol. 8vo., entitled, "*The Philosophical and Theological Works of the late truly learned John Hutchinson, Esq.*," by Julius Bate, Rector of Sutton, in Sussex, and Robert Spearman, late of Corpus Christi college, Oxford.

On the Monday before his death, Dr. Mead urged Mr. H. to be bled; saying pleasantly, "I will soon send you to Moses," meaning his studies; but Mr. H. taking it in the literal sense, answered in a muttering tone, "I believe, Doctor, you will;" and was so displeased, that he dismissed him for another physician; but he died in a few days after, August 28th, 1737.

**DISTINGUISHING TENETS.**—Mr. H. thought that the Hebrew Scriptures comprise a perfect system of natural philosophy, theology, and religion. So high an opinion did he entertain of the Hebrew language, that he thought the Almighty must have employed it to communicate every species of knowledge, human and divine, and that accordingly, every species of knowledge is to be found in the Old Testament; and both he and his followers laid a great stress on the evidence of Hebrew etymology. After Origen, and other eminent commentators, he asserted that the Scriptures were not to be understood and interpreted in a literal, but in a typical sense, and according to the *radical* import of the Hebrew

expressions;—that even the historical parts, and particularly those relating to the Jewish ceremonies, and levitical law, were to be considered in this light; and he asserted further, that, agreeably to this mode of interpretation, the Hebrew Scriptures would be found to testify amply concerning the nature and offices of Jesus Christ.

His plan was no doubt new, and out of the common line; no less indeed, than to find *Natural Philosophy* in the Bible, where hitherto it had been thought no such thing was to be met with, or ever intended. And upon that popular hypothesis, contrived to account for and excuse the palpable contradictions between the current language of Scripture, and the now received and applauded system of philosophy, it had been objected by the numerous tribes of free-thinkers, “that if the pen-men of the Bible were mistaken in natural things, they might be so in spiritual; or, if the God of nature had inspired them in the one, he would have also done so in the other.”

This triumphant attack upon the infallibility of the Scriptures, put our bold undertaker upon searching them in a manner different from what had hitherto been attempted, and induced him to try, whether the true and genuine sense of the original Hebrew, when fairly construed, without regard to any hypothesis ancient or modern, would not also be the true philosophy, and stand the test of every experiment and observation truly made.

His editors tell us, that the event answered his expectations; for, say they, he found upon examination, "That the Hebrew Scriptures no where ascribe motion to the body of the Sun, nor fixedness to the earth; that they describe the created system to be a *plenum* without any *vacuum* at all, and reject the assistance of gravitation, attraction, or any such occult qualities, for performing the stated operations of nature, which are carried on by the mechanism of the heavens, in their three-fold condition of *fire*, *light*, and *spirit*, or *air*, the material agents set to work at the beginning:—that the heavens, thus framed by Almighty wisdom, are an instituted emblem and visible substitute of *Jehovah Aleim*, the eternal three, the co-equal and co-adorable Trinity in unity:—that the unity of substance in the heavens points out the unity of essence, and the distinction of conditions, the personality in Deity, without confounding the persons or dividing the substance. And that, from their being made emblems, they are called in Hebrew, *Shemim*, the names, representatives, or substitutes; expressing by their names, that they are emblems, and by their conditions or offices, what it is they are emblems of."

He likewise found that the Hebrew Scriptures had some capital words, which, he thought had not been duly considered and understood, and which he has proved, or endeavoured to prove, contain in their radical meaning, the greatest and most comfortable truths. Thus, the word *Elohim*, which we call God, he reads *Aleim*, and refers it to the oath or conditional execration, by which the eternal cove-

nant of grace among the persons in *Jehovah*, was and is confirmed. The word *Berith*, which our translation renders *Covenant*, and upon which is built the favourite doctrine of mutual covenants between God and man, between Creator and creature, yea, as matters now stand, between king and rebel, he construes to signify, “he or that which purifies,” and so the *Purifier* or purification *for*, not *with*, man.—The *Cherubim*, which have been made “Angels placed as a guard to frighten Adam from breaking into Eden again,” he explains to have been an hieroglyphic of divine construction, or a sacred image to describe, as far as figures could go, the *Aleim* and man taken in, or *Humanity* united to *Deity*:—And so he treats of several other words of similar, though not quite so solemn, import. From all which he drew this conclusion, “That all the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish dispensation were so many delineations of Christ, in what he was to *be*, to *do*, and to *suffer*, and that the early Jews knew them to be types of his actions and sufferings, and by performing them as such, were in so far Christians, both in faith and practice.”\*—The *Cherubim*, and the glory around them, with the divine presence in them, his followers maintain to have been not only emblematical figures, representing the persons of the ever-blessed Trinity, as engaged in covenant for the redemption of man, but also, that they were intended “to keep or preserve the way of the tree of life,—

\* Mr. Skinner's *Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, vol. 2. p. 673, &c.

to shew man the way to life eternal, and keep him from losing or departing from it.”

That Melchizedec was an eminent type of Christ, there can be little doubt; but that he was actually the second person of the Trinity, in a human form, is a tenet of the Hutchinsonians, though not quite peculiar to them.—See a learned dissertation, attempting to prove this, in the first vol. of Mr. Holloway’s “*Originals*.”

“The air” (Mr. H—n supposes,) exists in three conditions, *fire*, *light*, and *spirit*; the two latter are the finer and grosser parts of the air in motion: from the earth to the sun, the air is finer and finer till it becomes pure light near the confines of the sun, and fire in the orb of the sun, or solar focus. From the earth towards the circumference of this system, in which he includes the fixed stars, the air becomes grosser and grosser till it becomes stagnant, in which condition, it is at the utmost verge of this system; from whence (in his opinion) the expression of ‘outer darkness, and blackness of darkness,’ used in the New Testament, seems to be taken.”

These are some of the principal outlines of this author’s doctrines, which, being at first thrown out in scattered pieces, were not much taken notice of, but when collected together, and given out to the public in one view, became in a short time the subject of much dispute, and of various entertainment, according to the various tastes of those who

looked into them. And though none of the bishops openly approved of them at first, yet as they passed no censure or prohibition upon them; several eminent divines, both of the church and among the dissenters, patronised them, and employed their pens, either in explaining and illustrating them, or in vindicating them from the attacks of such as, not daring to quarrel with the design in general, thought it enough to shew their dislike, by criticising upon some particulars in the execution.

COUNTRIES WHERE FOUND, EMINENT MEN AND WRITERS, PRO ET CON.—The controversy set on foot by the learned author of the “*Divine Legation of Moses*,” induced many to study the Hebrew Scriptures, which had been too long neglected; and this led them to the writings of Hutchinson, who, though sometimes visionary in his criticisms, must be allowed to have struck out some lights of admirable utility to the biblical student. Soon after his writings were collected and published, some Oxford divines gave them such attention, as made them be called by his name; and yet, being zealous lovers of the Church of England, they distinguished themselves by a firm adherence to her constituent principles and doctrines.

The followers of Mr. H. have not indeed, to this day, erected themselves into a sect or separate community, although they have suffered much obloquy from their brethren, and have been accounted little better than madmen by the world. Notwithstanding this, they are of all men the most

averse from schism,—are perhaps among the best and truest churchmen of these modern times, and are not far behind the most learned in the church. Among them may still be reckoned some eminent and respectable divines, both in England and Scotland; but their numbers seem at present to be rather decreasing than otherwise.

Of those who, in their day, were ranked in the list of Hutchinsonians, perhaps the most eminent were—Mr. Julius Bate and Mr. Parkhurst, the Lexicographers—Mr. Holloway, author of “*Originals*,” and “*Letter and Spirit* ;—Dr. Hodges, Provost of Oriel College, Oxford;—Mr. Henry Lee, author of *Sophon*, or “*Nature’s Characteristics of the Truth* ;”—Dr. Wetherell, late Master of University College, Oxford;—Mr. Romaine, —Bishop Horne, and Mr. William Jones, his lordship’s learned friend and biographer.

The first in Scotland who studied Mr. H.’s writings with any degree of attention, was Duncan Forbes, Esq. of Colloden, afterwards Lord President of the Court of Session, who not only honoured them with his approbation, but even took time, from the hurry and bustle of secular employment, to write some curious and elaborate dissertations, to illustrate the author’s design.\*

\* See in particular, in support of the Hutchinsonian scheme, his *Letter to a Bishop*, and his *Thoughts Concerning Religion Natural and Revealed*. He is allowed to be one of the ablest of all the expositors of the Hutchinsonian theology ; and Lord Woodhouselee remarks, that he “was in all respects one of the most eminent men of his time ;



With others they have met with the same variety of reception as in England. Some have adhered to the current notions, under pretence of veneration for the primitive fathers, whom they supposed these new discoveries seemed to contradict; while others, of perhaps equal acquaintance with, and regard for antiquity, have seen no such danger; but, having impartially examined Mr. H.'s writings, as far as their time and talents enabled them, have been happy to think that they had thereby acquired more excellent ideas of Christianity, and could more successfully combat the Arian, Socinian, and Deistical opposers of it, by his use of the Scripture artillery, than by all the dry metaphysical jargon of the schools.

Mr., afterwards Bishop, Horne, wrote "*A fair, candid, and impartial State of the Case between Sir Isaac Newton and Mr. Hutchinson,*" &c. in 1753, about which time, when Mr. H—n's principles were beginning to prevail in Oxford, a severe attack was made upon them in an anonymous pamphlet, intitled, "*A Word to the Hutchinsonians;*" and Mr. Horne, being personally aimed at, as the principal object of the author's animadversions, took up his pen in defence of himself and his friends, and wrote "*An Apology for certain Gentlemen in the University of Oxford aspersed in a late Anonymous Pamphlet,*" &c. Oxford, 1756.

—that his learning was extensive and profound, reaching even to the oriental languages, and that his piety was fervent and habitual."—*Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Lord Kaimes.*

But it was on the etymological quarter, where the Hutchinsonians seemed most vulnerable, or, where they might at least be annoyed with most appearance of advantage. Even some of Mr. Hutchinson's friends own, that he laid too great a stress in many instances on the evidence of Hebrew etymology, and are not backward to admit, that some of his followers carried the matter so far, that nothing else would go down with them, till, by degrees, they adopted a mode of speaking, which had a nearer resemblance to cant and jargon, than to sound and sober learning. Hence the controversy between them and Dr. T. Sharp, son of Archbishop Sharp, and Archdeacon of Northumberland, which was begun in 1750, and carried on till the end of 1755.—The subjects of it were,—the meaning of the words *Elohim* and *Berith*,—the antiquity of the Hebrew language and character,—and the exposition of the word *Cherubim*. These pieces made together three volumes 8vo. Bishop Secker, then Bishop of Oxford, it is said, “read over all Dr. Sharp's papers before they went to the press, and corrected and improved them throughout.”\*

The writings in opposition to Dr. S. were—“*Remarks on Dr. Sharp's Pieces on the Words Elohim and Berith*,” by the Rev. Benjamin Holloway;—“*The Evidence of Christianity contained in the Hebrew Words Aleim and Berith, stated and defend-*

\* *The Life of Archbishop Secker*, prefixed to his Sermons, p. 32.

ed," by the Rev. James Moody ;—" *A Reply to Dr. Sharp's Review and Defence of his Dissertations on the Scripture Meaning of Aleim and Berith,*" by Julius Bate, A. M. ;—" *A Second Part, by the same author* ;—and " *Strictures upon some Passages in Dr. Sharp's Cherubim,*" by the author of *Elihu, i. e.* Dr. Hodges, who also wrote the *Christian Plan*.

Mr. Hutchinson's divinity and philosophy have found advocates in Mr. Julius Bate,—Mr. Spearman,—Bishop Horne, and Mr. William Jones.\*

\* The reader is referred to the preface to the 2d edition of Mr. Jones's *Life of Bishop Horne*, for a statement of Hutchinsonian principles, more full than that here presented to him, but I presume not more correct, as this was reviewed and corrected in MS. by two distinguished Hutchinsonian divines.

Mr. Jones's life also, was written by William Stevens, Esq., another learned Hutchinsonian, as well as a respectable and most worthy man.

# THE MILLENIUM,

AND

# MILLENARIANS.

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NAME.—The Millenarians are those who believe according to an ancient tradition in the church, grounded on some doubtful texts in the book of Revelation and other Scriptures, that our Saviour shall reign a *thousand years* with the faithful upon earth after the first resurrection, before the full completion of final happiness; and their name, taken from the Latin word, *mille*, a thousand, has a direct allusion to the duration of this spiritual empire, which is styled the *Millenium*. The same name is also given to many who reject the literal interpretation of the Millenium, both as to its nature and its duration.

ORIGIN, RISE, AND PROGRESS.—A Millenium, or a future paradisaical state of the earth, is

viewed by some as a doctrine not of Christian, but of Jewish origin. The tradition which fixes the duration of the world in its present imperfect state to 6,000 years, and announces the approach of a Sabbath of 1,000 years of universal peace and plenty, to be ushered in by the glorious advent of the Messiah, has been traced up to Elias, a rabbinical writer, who flourished about two centuries before the birth of Christ; and, by some, even to Elias the Tishbite. It certainly obtained among the Chaldeans from the earliest times; and it is countenanced by Barnabas, Irenæus, and other primitive writers, and also by the Jews at the present day.\* But though the theory is animating and consolatory, and not very improbable, yet, as it has not the sanction of Scripture to support it, we are not bound to respect it any further than as a doubtful tradition.

The Jews understood several passages of the prophets, as Zechariah xiv. 16, &c., of that *millenium*, in which, according to their carnal apprehensions, the Messiah is to reign on earth, and to bring all nations within the pale, and under subjection to the ordinances, of the Jewish Church.†

Justin Martyr, the most ancient of the Fathers, was a great supporter of the doctrine of the Millennium, or that our Saviour shall reign with the faithful upon earth, after the resurrection, for a thousand years, which he declares was the belief of all ortho-

\* Levi's *Ceremonies of the Jews*, p. 206, and Mr. Gray's *Discourse on Rev. 20. v. 4, 5, 6.* p. 341.

† See Hieron, in *loc.*

dox Christians. But this opinion is not generally followed; for, though there has been perhaps no age of the church, in which this doctrine was not admitted by one or more divines of the first eminence, it, notwithstanding, appears, from the writings of Eusebius, Irenæus, and others, among the ancients, as well as from the histories of Dupin, Mosheim, and other moderns, that it was never adopted by the whole church, or made an article of the established creed in any nation.\* Origen, the most learned of the Fathers, and Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, usually, for his immense erudition, surnamed the Great, both opposed the doctrine that prevailed on the subject in their day; and Dr. Whitby, in his learned treatise on the subject, proves 1st, That the Millenium was never generally received in the church of Christ. 2dly, That there is no just ground to think it was derived from the Apostles.

On the other hand, Dr. T. Burnet, and others, maintain that it was very generally admitted till the Nicene Council, in 325, or till the fourth century. The Doctor supposes Dionysius of Alexandria, who wrote against Nepos, an Egyptian bishop, before the middle of the third century, to have been the first who attacked the doctrine; but Origen had previously assailed it in many of its fictitious additions.† The truth seems to be, as

\* The 41st Article of the Church of England, in 1553, was directed against it; and the 4th of the 39 Articles seems to be inconsistent with the Millenian scheme.

† See Mosheim's *Eccles. History*, Cent. 3, Part ii. Sect. 12.

Mr. Gray remarks, "that a spiritual reign of Christ was believed by all who carefully examined the Scriptures, though the popular notions of the Millennium were often rejected; and ancient as well as modern writers, assailed the extravagant superstructure, not the Scriptural foundation of the doctrine."

Pope John 22d preached up the doctrine of the Millennium in the 14th century, but I am not aware what view of it he embraced. During the Interregnum in England, in the time of Cromwell, there arose a set of enthusiasts, sometimes called *Millenarians*, but more frequently *Fifth Monarchy Men*, who expected the sudden appearance of Christ to establish on earth a new monarchy or kingdom. In consequence of this, some of them aimed at the subversion of all human government. In ancient history, we read of four great monarchies, the *Assyrian*, *Persian*, *Grecian*, and the *Roman*; and these men, believing that this new spiritual kingdom of Christ was to be the *fifth*, came to bear the name by which they were called.—They claimed to be the saints of God, and to have the dominion of Saints; Dan. vii. 27. expecting that, when Christ was come into this kingdom, to begin his reign upon earth, they, as his deputies, were to govern all things under him. They went so far as to give up their own Christian names, and assume others from Scripture, like the Manicheans of old.\*

"The factions of the last age," says Mr. Gray,

\* See the *Sussex Jury* in Hume's *Hist. A. D.* 1653.

alluding to the above period, "even in our own country, artfully availed themselves of popular delusions on this subject; and in the seditious commotions of later periods, we may see a tinge derived from the infusion of a similar spirit.

"A desire to be the humble instrument of God, in the furtherance of his designs, is praise-worthy and good; we must be careful, however, to distinguish this desire from the suggestion of any intemperate motive, which, like the evil spirit that enticed Ahab, may lead us to destruction. We cannot conspire with God's views, but by a considerate and circumspect observance of his laws. That no man can accelerate or retard the approach of the expected kingdom is certain, however active righteousness may be made subservient to its advancement. They who are led by indistinct fancies, and presumptuous confidence, to predict its coming, from the changes and revolutions which they behold, should be careful, lest they contribute, however undesignedly, to inflame the enthusiasm of the credulous, and to stir up the activity of the foolish.

"We ' must stand still, and see the salvation of God,' not insensible to the progress of the divine decrees, but not impatient to anticipate their completion.

"The most positive computations have often proved erroneous; but still, ' though the vision be yet for an appointed time, at the end it will speak;



though it tarry ; wait for it, because it will surely come.'\*\*\*

**DISTINGUISHING TENETS.**—About the middle of the fourth century, the Millenarians held the following tenets.

*1st.* That the city of Jerusalem should be rebuilt, and that the land of Judea should be the habitation of those who were to reign on the earth a thousand years.

*2dly.* That the first resurrection was not to be confined to the martyrs, but that, after the fall of Antichrist, all the just were to rise, and all that were on the earth were to continue for that space of time.

*3dly.* That Christ shall then come down from heaven, and be seen on earth, and reign there with his servants.

*4thly.* That the saints, during this period, shall enjoy all the delights of a terrestrial paradise.

These opinions were founded upon several passages in Scripture, which the Millenarians, among the fathers, understood in no other than a literal sense ; but which those moderns, who hold nearly the same opinion, consider as partly literal, and partly metaphorical. Of these passages, that upon which the greatest stress has been laid, is perhaps Rev. xx. v. 1 to 7.—This passage, the ancient Millenarians took in a sense grossly literal, and taught, that, during the Millenium, the saints on

\* *Discourses on various Subjects*, p. 346, 7.

earth were to enjoy every bodily delight. Most of the moderns, on the other hand, consider the power and pleasures of this kingdom as wholly spiritual; and they represent them as not to commence till after the conflagration of the present earth. But that this last supposition is a mistake, the following verses assure us; for we are told, that “when the 1000 years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of *the earth*;” and we have no reason to believe that he will have such power or such liberty in “the *new* heavens and the *new* earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

But the opinions of the moderns on this subject may be reduced to two.

1st. Some believe that Christ will reign *personally* on earth, and that the prophecies of the Millennium point to a resurrection of martyrs and other just men, to reign with him a thousand years in a visible kingdom.

2d. Others are inclined to believe, that, by the reign of Christ and the saints for a thousand years upon earth, “nothing more is meant, than that, before the general judgment, the Jews shall be converted,—genuine Christianity be diffused through all nations, and mankind enjoy that peace and happiness, which the faith and precepts of the gospel are calculated to confer on all by whom they are sincerely embraced.”—The state of the Christian church, say they, will be,

for a thousand years before the general judgment, so pure and so widely extended, that, when compared with the state of the world in the ages preceding, it may, in the language of Scripture, be called a resurrection from the dead.

In support of this interpretation, they quote two passages from St. Paul, in which a conversion from Paganism to Christianity, and a reformation of life, is called, a *resurrection from the dead*; viz. Rom. 6. 13, and Eph. 5. 14.—There is indeed an order in the resurrection, 1 Cor. 15. 24, but they no where observe mention made of a *first* and *second* resurrection at the distance of 1000 years from each other; whereas, were the Millenarian hypothesis well founded, the words should rather have run thus: “Christ the first fruits, then the martyrs at his coming, and 1000 years afterwards the residue of mankind,—then cometh the end,” &c.

Mr. Joseph Mede, Dr. Gill, Bishop Newton, Mr. Winchester, Mr. Eyre, Mr. Kett, &c., are advocates for the first of these opinions, and contend for the *personal reign* of Christ on earth.

“When these great events shall come to pass,” says Bishop N., “of which we collect from the prophecies, this to be the proper order; the protestant witnesses shall be greatly exalted, and the 1260 years of their prophecy in sackcloth, and of the tyranny of the beast, shall end together;—the conversion and restoration of the Jews succeed;—then follows the ruin of the Ottoman em-

pire;—and then the total destruction of Rome, and of Antichrist.

“When these great events, I say, shall come to pass, then shall the kingdom of Christ commence, or the reign of Saints upon earth. So Daniel expressly informs us, that the kingdom of Christ and the Saints will be raised upon the ruins of the kingdom of Antichrist. Chap. 7, v. 26—7. So likewise St. John saith, Chap. 20, v. 2—6. that upon the final destruction of the beast and the false prophet, “Satan is bound,” &c.

“It is, I conceive,” (adds the learned Prelate,) “to these great events, the fall of Antichrist, the re-establishment of the Jews,\* and the beginning of the glorious *Millenium*, that the three different dates in Daniel of 1260 years, 1290 years, and 1335 years, are to be referred. And as Daniel saith, Chap. 12, v. 12. “Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 years.” So St. John saith, Chap. 20, v. 6. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the *first* resurrection.” Blessed and happy indeed will be this period; and it is very observable, that the martyrs and confessors of Jesus, in Papist as well as Pagan times, will be raised to partake of this felicity. Then shall all those gracious promises in the Old Testament be fulfilled,—of the amplitude and extent,—of the peace and prosperity,—of the glory and happiness of the church in the latter days.

\* Bishop Newton is of the opinion of those who believe that the Jews will yet be actually called to inhabit their own land.—See above, vol. I. p. 109.

“ Then in the full sense of the words, Rev. 11, v. 15. “ Shall the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. ”

“ According to tradition,\* these thousand years of the reign of Christ and the Saints, will be the *Seventh Millenary* of the world; for as God created the world in *six* days, and rested on the *seventh*, so the world, it is argued, will continue 6000 years, and the *seventh* thousand will be the great *Sabbatism*, or holy rest to the people of God: “ One day, being with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” 2 Pet. 3, 8.—According to tradition too, these thousands years of the reign of Christ and the Saints, are the *great day of Judgment*,† in the morning or beginning whereof, shall be the coming of Christ in flaming fire, and the particular judgment of Antichrist, and the first resurrection; and in the *evening* or *conclusion* whereof, shall be the *general resurrection* of the dead, small and great; “ and they shall be judged every man according to their works.”‡

On this curious subject, Mr. Winchester freely indulges his imagination, in his “ *Lectures on the Prophecies*,” and in different particulars, evidently

\* See Dr. T. Burnet’s “ *Sacred Theory of the Earth*,” and Mr. Gray’s *Discourses*, p. 341.

† See also Mr. Wesley’s *Serm.* on Rom. 14. v. 10, entitled, “ *The Great Assize*.”

‡ Bishop Newton’s 26th “ *Dissertation on the Prophecies*,” in fin.

appears to speak without book. Most other systems respecting the Millenium, include in them the eternity of future punishment, but his plan is made consistent with his doctrine of *Universal Restoration*.

Such is the representation of the Millenium, as given by those that embrace the opinion of Christ's reigning *personally* on earth during the period of *one thousand years*. But the Editors of the *Encyclop. Britan.*, &c. are advocates for the second modern opinion respecting it. Dr. Whitby, also, in a dissertation on the subject; Lowman on the *Revelations*; Dr. Priestley, in his "*Institutes of Religion*," and the author of the "*Illustrations of Prophecy*," contend against the literal interpretation of the Millenium, both as to its nature and its *duration*.

Dr. Priestley, entertaining an exalted idea of the advantages to which our nature may be destined, treats the limitation of the duration of the world, to *seven thousand years*, as a rabbinical fable; and intimates, that the *thousand years* may be interpreted *prophetically*; then every day would signify a *year*, and the *Millenium* last for *three hundred and sixty-five thousand years*!—Again, he supposes, that there will be no resurrection of any individuals, till the general resurrection; and that the *Millenium* implies only the *revival of religion*.\*

\* It should, however, be noticed here, that Dr. P. seems to have inclined, at a later period of his life, to the *personal reign of Christ*.—See his Sermon preached on occasion of

Of much the same opinion, as to the duration of the Millenium, so called, is the author of the "*Illustrations of Prophecy*;" but he contends, that in it a melioration of the human race will gradually take place, by *natural* means, throughout the world.

For his reasons, together with an animated sketch of that truly golden age, the work itself may be consulted, and particularly Chap. 31.

Various other theories have been formed on this mysterious subject, some of which should never have seen the light, and others of them cannot be too soon consigned to darkness and oblivion. On such a topic, I agree with Mr. Evans, "that we cannot suggest our opinions with too great a degree of modesty;" and with Mr. Faber, when he says, that, "respecting the yet future and mysterious Millenium, the less that is said upon the subject the better. Unable myself to form the slightest conception of its *specific* nature, I shall weary neither my own, nor my reader's patience with premature remarks upon it. That it *will* be a season of great blessedness is certain: further than this, we know nothing *definitely*."\*

the General Fast, Feb. 28, 1794, and his *Farewel Sermon*, preached at Hackney, previous to his emigration to America.

\* *Dissertation on the Prophecies*.—On the subject, however, of the precise time of the commencement of the Millenium, Mr. F. seems not disposed to adhere so closely to this very laudable diffidence, but ventures to speak of it in definite terms. See above, vol. 1st, p. 109, Note.

COUNTRIES WHERE FOUND; AUTHORS, PRO ET CON, &c.—The Millenarians do not indeed form a sect distinct from others, but their distinguishing tenet, in one view or other, prevails in a greater or less degree among most denominations into which the Christian world is divided. Much information on the subject may be found in Mede's *Works*, folio; "*Hopkins on the Millenium*;"—Dr. Whitby's *Treatise* on it, at the end of the second volume of his *Commentary on the New Testament*;—Mr. Robert Gray's *Discourses*, Discourse 10th;—Bishop Newton's 25th and 26th *Dissertations on the Prophecies*;—Bellamy's *Treatise on the Millennium*;—Lardner's *Credibility*, vols. 4, 5, 7, and 9;—Taylor's *Sermons on the Millenium*;—and Mr. Eyre's tract, entitled, *Observations on the Prophecies, relating to the Restoration of the Jews*.

There are also four papers of Mr. Shrubsole's on the subject, in the sixth volume of the *Theol. Miscel.*;—the Rev. Mr. Bicheno, likewise, of Newbury, Berks, has, in his late publications, thrown out some curious particulars respecting the Millennium. See an ingenious but fanciful work of his, entitled, "*The Restoration of the Jews, the Crisis of all Nations*."



# UNIVERSAL RESTORATION,

AND

## UNIVERSALISTS.

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NAMES.—Those who believe, that, as Christ died for all, so, before he shall have delivered up his mediatorial kingdom to the Father, *all* shall be brought to a participation of the benefits of his death, in their restoration to holiness and happiness, are called *Universal Restorationists*, or *Universalists*, and their doctrine, the doctrine of *Universal Restoration*. Some of its friends have maintained it also under the name of *Universal Salvation*; but perhaps the former name, which Mr. Vidler seems to prefer, and which is here adopted, is that by which it should be distinguished; for the Universalists do not hold an universal exemption from future punishment, but merely the recovery of all those that shall have been exposed to it. They have likewise a just claim to this title on other grounds; for their doctrine, which includes the restoration, or “*restitution of all the intelligent off-*

*spring of God,"* or of all "*lapsed intelligences,"* seems to embrace even the fallen angels.\*

RISE, PROGRESS, &c.—From the earliest days of Christianity, it has been the general opinion throughout Christendom, that this life is the only state of probation with which men shall be indulged, and that after death the wicked and impenitent will pass into a state of endless misery, to be made examples of the justice of God in asserting the authority of his laws. But though this has been the general, it has perhaps never been (at least it was not long,) the *universal* opinion among Christians.

In almost every period, and more especially of late, different sentiments have been entertained upon this mysterious subject, and different theories of future punishment have been proposed.

*Origen*, a Christian Father of the 3d century, seems to have been the first who openly espoused the doctrine of the temporary duration of future punishments; *St. Augustine*, bishop of Hippo,

\* Hence the famous Lavater, who was an Universalist, tells us that he prayed for the damned, and even the devils. "My prayers," says he, "were comprehensive." ——"I embraced in my heart all that is called man; present, past, and future times, and nations; children in their mothers' wombs; the dead, the damned, yea Satan himself: I presented them all to God, with the warmest wishes that he would have mercy on them all."—See Dr. Erskine's *Sketches of Church History*, vol. 1. p. 57, &c.

about the beginning of the fifth century, mentions some divines in his day, whom he calls the merciful doctors, who held it; and it was also propagated by many of the German Baptists, even before the Reformation. From that time, many, who have not been able to discover any principle in the divine conduct but that of benevolence, nor any ultimate view in his dispensations towards his creatures, but that of their happiness, have concluded, that eternal misery could not possibly enter into the divine plan;—that God could never choose to create any, on whom it would be *necessary* to inflict it; and that every degree of suffering, either in this or the world to come, will be emendatory, and terminate in the final happiness of such as are the subjects of it. And, indeed, the doctrine of the final happiness of mankind, which presents the prospect of the termination of all evil, and of a period in which the deep shades of guilt and misery, which have so long enveloped the universe, shall be for ever dispelled, is so pleasing a speculation to a benevolent mind, that we need not wonder it has met with many who have maintained it. From the earliest period, I can readily suppose that the belief of it may have been secretly entertained by some, who, in the face of opposition and danger, had not resolution to avow it. Now, however, it has broken through every restraint, and walks abroad in every form that is most likely to convince the philosophic, to rouse the unthinking, and to melt the tender.

**DISTINGUISHING TENETS.**—The Universalists admit the reality and equity of future punishment; but they contend that it will be corrective in its nature, and limited in its duration.—They “teach the doctrine of *Election*, but not in the exclusive Calvinistic sense of it: They suppose that God has chosen some, for the good of all; and that his final purpose towards all, is intimated by his calling his elect the *first* born and the *first* fruits of his creatures, which, say they, implies other branches of his family, and a future ingathering of the harvest of mankind.—They teach also, that the righteous shall have part in the first resurrection, shall be blessed and happy, and be made priests and kings to God and to Christ in the Millennial kingdom, and that over them the second death shall have no power;—that the wicked will receive a punishment apportioned to their crimes;—that punishment itself is a mediatorial work, and founded upon mercy, consequently, that it is a mean of humbling, subduing, and finally reconciling the sinner to God. They add, that the words rendered, *eternal*, *everlasting*, *for ever*, and *for ever and ever*, in the Scriptures, are frequently used to express the duration of things that have ended, or must end: and if it is contended, that these words are sometimes used to express *proper eternity*, they answer, that then the *subject* with which the words are connected, must determine the sense of them; and as there is nothing in the nature of future punishment which can be rendered as a reason why it should be endless, they infer, that the above words

ought always to be taken in a limited sense, when connected with the infliction of misery.”

They say, that their doctrine is “most consonant to the perfections of the Deity,—most worthy of the character of Christ, as the mediator; and that upon no other plan can the Scriptures be made consistent with themselves.—They teach their followers ardent love to God; and peace, meekness, candour, and universal love to men, they observe, are the natural result of their views.

Their scheme appears to them to be the only one that in the least bids fair to unite two great bodies of Christians that have long and bitterly opposed each other, the Arminians and the Calvinists, by uniting the leading doctrines of both, as far as they are found in the Scriptures: from which union, they think the sentiment of *Universal Restoration* naturally flows.\*

Thus they reason—“The Arminian proves from Scripture, that God is love;—that he is good to all; that his tender mercy is over all his works; that he gave his Son for the world; that Christ died for the world, even for the whole world; and God will have all men to be saved.

“The Calvinist proves also from Scripture, that God is without variableness or shadow of turning;

\* See the Editor's *Preface to the Everlasting Gospel*, of P. Siegvold, who was a German Universalist.

—that his love, like himself, alters not;—that the death of Christ would be efficacious towards all for whom it was intended;—that God will perform all his pleasure, and that his council shall stand.—The union of these Scriptural principles is the final restoration of all men.

“Taking the principles of the Calvinists and Arminians separately, we find the former teaching, or at least inferring, that God doth *not* love all, but that he made the greater part of men to be endless monuments of his wrath; and the latter declaring the love of God to all; but admitting his *final failure* of restoring the greater part. The God of the former is great in power and wisdom, but deficient in goodness, and capricious in his conduct: Who that views this character can sincerely love it? The God of the latter is exceeding good, but deficient in power and wisdom: Who can trust such a being? If therefore, both Calvinists and Arminians love and trust the Deity, it is not under the character which their several systems ascribe to him; but they are constrained to hide the imperfections which their views cast upon him, and boast of a God, of whose *highest glory* their several schemes will not admit.”\*

The Universalists have to contend, on one hand, with such as believe in the eternity of future misery, and on the other with those that teach that *destruction* or *extinction of being* will be the final

\*Mr. Evans's *Sketch*.

state of the wicked.\* In answer to the latter, they say, "That before we admit that God is under the necessity of striking any of his rational creatures out of being, we ought to pause and enquire,

1st, "Whether such an act is consistent with the Scriptural character of the Deity, as possessed of all possible wisdom, goodness and power?"

2d, "Whether it would not contradict many parts of Scripture; such, for instance, as speak of the restitution of all things—the gathering together of all things in Christ—the reconciliation of all things to the Father, by the blood of the cross—the destruction of death, &c." These texts, they think, are opposed equally to endless misery and to final destruction.

3d, "Whether those who will be finally destroyed, are not in a worse state, through the mediation of Christ, than they would have been without it? This question is founded on a position of the friends of destruction; viz. that extinction of being, without a resurrection, would have been the only punishment of sin, if Christ had not become the resurrection and the life to man. Consequently, the resurrection and future punishment spring from the system of mediation; but, they ask, is the justification to life, which came upon all men in Christ Jesus, nothing more than a resurrection to endless death to millions?"

\* See the article *Destructionists*, below.

4th, “ Whether the word, *destruction*, will warrant such a conclusion? It is evident that destruction is often used in Scripture to signify a cessation of present existence only, without any contradiction of the promises that relate to a future universal resurrection. They think, therefore, that they ought to admit an universal restoration of men, notwithstanding the future destruction which is threatened to sinners; because, say they, the Scriptures teach both.”\*

Their system may be found in Mr. E. Winchester’s *Dialogues*, *The Universalist’s Miscellany*, a periodical work, now entitled, *The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature*;—*Thoughts on the Divine Goodness relative to the Government of Moral Agents, particularly displayed in future Rewards and Punishments*, translated from the French of M. Ferd. Oliviere Petitpierre, †—in an “ *Essay on Universal Redemption, tending to prove that the general Sense of Scripture favours the Opinion of the final Salvation of all mankind*,” by Mr. James Browne, a clergyman of the Church of England, and in “ *Universal Restoration* exhi-

\* Mr. Evans’s *Sketch*, 10th edition, page 184, &c. where he refers to Vidler’s Notes on Winchester’s *Dialogues on the Restoration*, 4th edit. p. 176.

† Petitpierre, whose “ *Le Plan De Dieu*,” or *Plan of God with Respect to Man*, in which the doctrine of this article is taught, was published at Hamburg in 1786, was deprived of his office by the King of Prussia, as Lord of the Principality of *Neufchatel*, on the complaint of the inhabitants, for preaching against the orthodox doctrine on this head.



bited in a series of Extracts, from *Winchester, White, Seigvolck, Dr, Chauncy, Bishop Newton,* and *Petitpierre*; some of the most remarkable Authors, who have written in Defence of that interesting Subject," 12mo.

COUNTRIES WHERE FOUND, AND AUTHORS PRO ET CONTRA.—Those who deny the eternity of future punishments have not formed themselves into any separate body or distinct society; but are to be found in most Christian countries, and among many denominations of Christians. Their doctrines make part of the creed of some Arians, as of Mr. Whiston;—of many Deists, as of Mr. Hobbes, Mr. Tindal, &c., and of most Socinians, as of Socinus, Dr. Priestley, Mr. Fellowes, &c. Nor need we be surprised that libertines and Atheists hold it, and that they strive to bring others over to their opinion.—“The tyranny of priests,” says Dupont, the Atheist, in the National Convention, December, 1792, “extends their opinion to another life, of which they have no other idea than that of eternal punishment; a doctrine which some men have hitherto had the good nature to believe. But these prejudices must now fall; *we* must destroy *them*, or *they* will destroy *us*.”

The *Menonites*, in Holland, have long held the doctrine of the Universalists; the people called *Dunkers*, or *Tinkers*, in America, descended from the German Baptists, hold it, and also the *Shakers*; Dr. Rust, Bishop of Dromore, in Ireland, defended it in his “*Lux Orientalis*,” about the end of

the 17th century; and, in England, soon after, Mr. Colliber and Mr. Jeremiah White wrote in defence of it. The Chevalier Ramsay, in his elaborate work of “*The Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion*,” espouses it: Archbishop Tillotson, in ser. iii., vol. 3. folio, seems to countenance it; as does Dr. T. Burnet, master of the Charter House, more openly, in the 11th chapter of his work “*On the State of the Dead*.” Mr. William Law seems to have maintained it. See Law’s *Collection of Letters*. It is also defended in the 1st and 2d volumes of “*The Phœnix*;” and for a full list of those who had written on the other side before the middle of the last century, see Johnson’s “*Quæstiones Philosophicæ*,” page 215.

But the writers who have treated the subject most fully of late are, Bishop Newton, in one of his *Dissertations*, a posthumous work;—Mr. Stonehouse, Rector of Islington;—Dr. Chauncy, of Boston, in America;—Dr. Hartley, in the 2d vol. of his *Observations on Man*;—Mr. Purves of Edinburgh;—Mr. E. Winchester, in his *Dialogues*;—Mr. William Vidler, and Mr. N. Scarlett, in his new Translation of the N. Testament, in which the Greek term *αἰών* is rendered *age*; and in his appendix, he has proposed that its derivative *αἰώνιον*, should be rendered *agelasting*, instead of everlasting or eternal.

The writers who have more particularly animadverted upon the doctrine of late are, in America, President Edwards, and his son Dr. Ed-

wards; and in England, Mr. Dan. Taylor, Mr. Fisher, and Mr. Andrew Fuller, author of "*The Socinian and Calvinistic Systems compared*," &c. See his *Letters* to Mr. Vidler;—Scrutator's "*Letters to an Universalist*," and the *Universalist's Miscellany*, in which, from the 1st to the 4th volume, will be found the controversy on the subject between Mr. Vidler, Mr. Fuller and Mr. Fisher.—See also three able sermons on the *Eternity of Future Punishments*, preached before the University of Oxford;—two of them by Mr. Archdeacon Dodwell, (of Berks), in 1743, in answer to Whiston; and the third, by Mr. Crouch, the present\* learned and very respectable Vice Principal of St. Edmund Hall.

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.—Some will not believe what they cannot comprehend;—others, what cannot be demonstrated;—many what opposes their corrupt passions and inclinations;—others, what militates against human pride and self-righteousness;—and others, what must fill their guilty consciences with the most alarming fears. Hence the denial, as of other fundamental truths of Christianity, so also of the eternal duration of future punishments; and, as has been well observed on this subject by an able divine, few complain "that eternal punishments are too severe, but those for whom they are not severe enough to keep them from them."—This is one

\* Or rather, *late* Vice Principal and Tutor, for he has now resigned that very laborious and important situation.

thing, it is true, of which we cannot have ocular demonstration; but to believe punishment to be *not* eternal, is to return to the discarded notion of *Purgatory*; or that those who have not duly repented and believed upon earth, may be reformed by sufferings after death.

Many deny that the punishment of eternal death was implied in the sentence denounced against Adam. Among these are Bishop Burnet, on the 9th *Article*:—Dr. Bennett on *The Articles*; Dr. Hey, in his *Norrisian Lectures*, and Mr. Ludlam in his *Essays*. And many Churchmen, it is feared, explain away the strong language of Scripture, and of the Church of England, respecting the punishment of finally impenitent sinners, and suggest doubts, whether “all men” may not “be happy ultimately.” Among these may be reckoned the late Dr. Paley,\* and Mr. William Gilpin.† —“We are not called upon by our Church,” says Dr. Hey, “to subscribe to the eternity of hell-torments, nor even to condemn those who affirm that all men shall be finally saved.”‡ But the Church uses, and constantly repeats, in regard both to the intensity and duration of this punishment, the very strongest expressions:—such surely are these, to “perish everlastingly;”—to “go into

\* See the chapter on *the Benevolence of God*, in his *Moral and Political Philosophy*.

† Prebendary of Salisbury, and Vicar of Boldre, in his *Sermons and Hints*; and yet on this subject, he is highly approved by the Editors of a respectable Review.

‡ *Norrisian Lectures*, vol. ii. p. 390.

everlasting fire ;"—“ God’s wrath and everlasting damnation ;”—“ hell fire ;”—“ the bitter pains of eternal death,” &c.—How is it possible to represent intense and never-ending misery, if this language does not? The Dr. however adds, that “ though one were inclined to *hope* with Dr. Hartley, that *all men* will be *happy ultimately*; i. e. when punishment has done its proper work in reforming principles and conduct;” in other words, when our state of purgatory is ended; “ Yet to *affirm* it must always be *presumption*.”—The condemnation of those who affirmed this was required in the 42d, or the last article of Edward VI., and the Doctor thinks reasonably. The title of the Article was, “ *All men shall not be saved at length.*”

By teaching this doctrine of the final restoration of all men, divines greatly undermine and weaken a main bulwark against the general overflowings of immorality and vice. With their extenuated views of the effects of the fall, and of the rigour of the law, and of the malignity of sin, they do not readily conceive that the worst of men can deserve to suffer “ the bitter pains of eternal death.” It is a doctrine not very reconcileable with their notions of the object of God in our creation, and their resolution of all the divine attributes into those of pure mercy and benevolence, (Dr. Paley, as above;) and from the little use they make of it themselves, and the severity with which they treat the ordinary Scripture use of it by others, there certainly remains a doubt whether

they really believe the doctrine or not. But, whatever may be said to the contrary, and however ungrateful the subject may be, if the doctrine is *really believed*, nay, if it is only thought probable, or even possible, so far is its extreme awfulness from furnishing a reason for generally concealing it, that this consideration is the very strongest reason why impenitent sinners should hear it honestly proclaimed.

It is maintained by the friends of the *non-eternity* of future punishment, that it cannot be eternal, "because there is no proportion between temporary crimes and eternal punishments;" and hence some of the ablest of them, as Chauncy, Petitpierre, Winchester, &c., have strenuously opposed the doctrine of endless punishment on the ground of its *injustice*; but if such punishment be threatened by God, and any where recorded in Scripture, it cannot surely be unjust, for shall not "*the Judge of all the earth do right?*" and therefore Mr. Vidler very properly places the question on other grounds, and asserts, that "it is not whether endless punishment be in itself just, but whether God has any where threatened any description of sinners with it." And here they insist, that the word *everlasting*, is "not to be taken in its utmost extent; and that it signifies no more than a long time, or a time whose precise boundary is unknown."

But, in answer to this, it is alleged, that the same word is used, and that sometimes in the very same

place, so express the *eternity* of the happiness of the righteous, and the *eternity* of the misery of the wicked; and that there is no reason to believe that the words express two such different ideas, as standing in the same connexion.

See Scrutator's (Mr. C. Jerram) *Letters to an Universalist*, and Lampe's *Theological Dissertations concerning the Endless Duration of Punishment*, translated by the Rev. Joseph Robertson, Edinburgh, 12mo, 1796.\*

\* For some account of the *Rellyan Universalists*, who receive their name from James Relly, (see above, volume ii. page 268, note,) and have a chapel in Windmill-Street, Finsbury Square, London, and some members in different parts of England, as Plymouth, Plymouth Dock, &c., and also at Boston, Philadelphia, and other parts of America, where their sentiments were first taught by a Mr. Murray, I beg leave to refer the reader to Hannah Adams's *View*, and Mr. Evans's *Sketch*, as in regard to them I have nothing new to add to their accounts.

## DESTRUCTIONISTS.

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NAME.—Those who hold a kind of middle scheme between the system of *Universal Restoration*, and that of *Endless Misery*, or who maintain that the wicked shall neither be for ever miserable, nor finally saved, but that, after passing through an awful judgment, and a condemnation proportioned to their crimes, they shall be punished with an utter extinction of being, are called *Destructionists*.

DISTINGUISHING TENET.—They say, “that the Scripture positively asserts this doctrine of *destruction*;—that the nature of future punishment, (which the Scripture terms *death*,) determines the meaning of the words *everlasting*, *eternal*, *for ever*, &c., as denoting endless duration; because no law ever did or can inflict the punishment of death for a limited period;—that the punishment cannot be corrective, because no man was ever put to death,



either to convince his judgment, or reform his conduct;—that if the wicked receive a punishment *apportioned* to their crimes, their deliverance is neither to be attributed to the mercy of God, nor the mediation of Jesus Christ, but is an act of absolute justice;—and finally, that the mediatorial kingdom of Christ will never be delivered up, since the Scripture asserts, that ‘of his kingdom there shall be no end.’”

Those who hold this doctrine of the *destruction of the wicked*, are accused of espousing the doctrine of *annihilation*, but this they deny, alleging that, “philosophically speaking, there can be no annihilation; and that *destruction* is the express phrase used in the New Testament.”

EMINENT MEN AND WRITERS PRO ET CON.  
—For this doctrine there have been several advocates distinguished for their erudition and piety. It has been more particularly adopted by Dr. John Taylor, of Norwich, the Rev. Mr. J. Bourn, of Birmingham,\* from whom they are sometimes called *Bourneans*, Mr. J. Nicol Scott, and Dr. Price. Mr. J. Marsom also has strenuously contended for it in two small volumes, of which there has lately been a second edition with additions; and the same scheme has likewise been lately supported in an

\* See the last Sermon of the 1st volume of Mr. Bourn’s *Discourses on the Principles and Evidences of Natural Religion, and the Christian Revelation*, and his *Letter to the Rev. S. Chandler, D. D. concerning the Christian Doctrine of Future Punishment*.

elaborate manner by Mr. Clark, in a work entitled, "*A Vindication of the Honour of God, in a Scriptural Refutation of the Doctrine of Eternal Misery and Universal Salvation.*"

If the doctrine of *annihilation* be connected with that of *destruction*, as many seem to think, the great Dr. Watts may be considered, in some measure, as a *Destructionist*; since it was his opinion that the children of ungodly parents, who die in infancy, are *annihilated*. And while Mr. Forsyth, in his *Principles of Moral Science*, argues against a future state of rewards and punishments, and confers immortality on the elect few who have cultivated their intellectual powers in this life, he "very charitably consigns the multitude to inevitable annihilation."


On the other side, Dr. S. Chandler maintained a short controversy with Mr. Bourn, about the year 1759, wherein he defended the eternity of future punishments;—and Dr. Edwards in his answer to Dr. Chauncy, on the *Salvation of all Men*, says that the *Destruction* scheme was provisionally retained by Dr. Chauncy, *i. e.* in case the scheme of *Universal Salvation* should fail him, and therefore Dr. Edwards, in his *Salvation of all men strictly Examined*, appropriates a chapter to the consideration of it. See also Hannah Adams's *View*, and above, p. 385.


## SWEDENBORGIANS.\*

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NAME.—The SWEDENBORGIANS, commonly so called, denote that particular denomination of Christians, who admit the testimony of *Baron Swedenborg*, and direct their lives in agreement with the doctrines taught in the theological writings of that author. Not that they call themselves by that name, or wish it to be applied to them, since they rather choose to be considered as the disciples of JESUS CHRIST, and glory in the name of Christians, in preference to any other title whatsoever.†

\*  The following account of this religious sect, or party, was drawn up and sent me, by one of the most learned and distinguished of that “numerous body of the clergy of the Church of England, who,” as noticed below, “are disposed to think favourably” of Baron Swedenborg’s testimony.


†  The members of this denomination, who have separated from other Communions, and formed one of their own, take the name of the *New Jerusalem Church*, in allu-

FOUNDER AND HIS WRITINGS.—The author from whom this denomination of Christians derive their name, was the son of a Bishop of West Gothia, in the kingdom of Sweden, whose name was *Swedberg*, a man of considerable learning and celebrity in his time.

The son was born at Stockholm, the 29th January, in the year of our Lord 1688. He enjoyed early the advantages of a liberal education, and being naturally endowed with uncommon talents for the acquirement of learning, his progress in the sciences was rapid and extensive; and he soon distinguished himself by several publications in the Latin language, which gave proof of equal genius and erudition. It may reasonably be supposed, that, under the care of his pious and reverend father, our author's religious instruction was not unattended to. This, indeed, appears plain, from the general tenor of his life and writings, which are marked with strong and lively characters of a mind deeply impressed with a sense of the Divine Being, and of all the relative duties thence resulting.

Perhaps the most authentic account of his general character and publications may be found in the *Funeral Oration*, or *Eulogy*, delivered after his decease,\* by Monsieur *Sandel*, Superintendent

sion to the New Jerusalem, spoken of in the Revelation of St. John; and the name of *Temple*, is that which they usually give their places of worship.

\*  Baron S. died in London in 1772.

ant of the Mines, Knight of the Order of the Polar Star, and Member of the Academy of Sciences, at Stockholm, in the Great Hall of the House of Nobles, in the presence of the said Academy, on the 7th of October, 1772. The oration was published by the Abbé Perneti, and is annexed to his French translation of Swedenborg's *Treatise on Heaven and Hell*. From this oration, it appears that our author, at a very early age, became an object of royal attention and favour, being admitted to frequent converse with *Charles XII.*, then king of Sweden, and appointed by him to the office of Assessor of the Metallic College, a place of great public trust, and of considerable emolument. He was also ennobled in the year 1719, by Queen *Ulrica Eleanora*, and named SWEDENBORG, from which time he took his seat with the Nobles of the Equestrian order, in the Triennial Assembly of the States. He was made a fellow by invitation of the Royal Academy of Sciences, at Stockholm, and had a like honour conferred on him by foreign Societies. He lived in much esteem with the bishops and nobles of his own country; and his acquaintance was sought after by the most distinguished characters in various parts of Europe, with many of whom he continued to correspond till his death.

To the above account of Monsieur Sandel, respecting the *character* of Baron Swedenborg, may be added, the testimony of a learned and respectable clergyman of the Church of England, the

late Rev. *Thomas Hartley*, Rector of Winwick, in Northamptonshire, who was intimately acquainted with our author, and who, in a letter to a friend, thus expresses himself: "It may reasonably be supposed, that I have weighed the character of Swedenborg in the scale of my best judgment, from the personal knowledge I had of him, from the best information I could procure concerning him, and from a diligent perusal of his writings; and, according thereto, I have found him to be the sound divine, the good man, the deep philosopher, the universal scholar, and the polite gentleman."\*

The philosophical works, published in Latin, by Baron Swedenborg, are both numerous and important; and many of them form a principal branch of the literature, cultivated in several universities on the continent. One of these works, is entitled, *Principia rerum Naturalium, sive novorum Tentaminum Phænomena mundi elementaris Philosophicè explicandi*, of which it is remarkable, that the writers of the French *Encyclopedie* have enriched their observations on chemical subjects, by various extracts from it. Another is entitled *Regnum Animale*, and contains a learned discussion on the various parts and uses of the animal economy. But the theological works, which issued from our author's pen, are still more numerous and more

\* See Mr. Hartley's *Letter*, page 17, prefixed to the English translation of the *True Christian Religion*.

interesting. The principal of them are the following:—

1. *Arcana Cœlestia*, or *Heavenly Mysteries*, in eight volumes quarto, which were published in different years, from 1749—1756, containing an exposition of the internal spiritual sense of the books of Genesis and Exodus.

2. *A Treatise on Heaven and Hell*, from things heard and seen, published at London, in the year 1758, in one volume quarto, containing a particular account of both kingdoms.

3. *The Delights of Wisdom concerning Conjugal Love*, published at Amsterdam, in the year 1758, in one volume quarto, proving the sanctity and eternity of that love.

4. *Angelic Wisdom, concerning the Divine Love and Divine Wisdom*, published at Amsterdam, in the year 1763, in one volume quarto, being a metaphysical discussion on the divine nature and operation.

5. *Angelic Wisdom, concerning the Divine Providence*, published at Amsterdam, in the year 1764, in one volume quarto, demonstrating the operation of Providence in things most minute, notwithstanding appearances to the contrary.

6. *The Apocalypse Revealed*, published at Amsterdam, in the year 1766, in one volume quarto, containing an exposition of the internal spiritual sense of that extraordinary book.

7. *True Christian Religion, or the Universal Theology of the New Church, predicted by the Lord in Daniel, chap. vii. 13, 14, and in the Apo-*

*calypse*, chap. xxi. 1, 2, published at Amsterdam, in the year 1771, in one volume quarto, *treating of God the Creator, and of Creation, of the Lord the Redeemer, and of Redemption, of the Holy Spirit, or the Divine Operation, of the Divine Trinity, of the Sacred Scripture, or Word of the Lord, of the Decalogue, of Faith, of Charity, and of Good Works, of Freewill, of Repentance, of Reformation and Regeneration, of Imputation, of Baptism and the Holy Supper, of the Consummation of the Age, the Lord's Advent, and a New Heaven and New Church.*

To the above, may be added several smaller treatises, as the *Last Judgment and Babylon destroyed*,—the *White Horse, treated of in the Apocalypse*,—the *New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine*,—the *Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord*, concerning the *Sacred Scriptures*, concerning *Faith*, and concerning *Life*,—a *Summary Exposition of the Doctrine of the New Church*; and, lastly,—a *Treatise on Influx, or concerning the Commerce of the Soul and Body.*

It does not appear that the theological writings of Baron Swedenborg were much attended to during his life time, except by his particular friends; but after his decease, they began to be translated into several modern languages, as the *German*, the *English*, and *French*, and were much sought after by the serious and well-disposed. The first translation of any note into English, was made by the Rev. T. Hartley, above



named, from the Latin *Treatise on Influx*, and was accompanied by a learned and appropriate preface, and various notes, in the year 1770. This was followed, two or three years afterwards, by a translation of the *Treatise on Heaven and Hell*, with a preface and notes, by the same translator. The increasing demand for these works called for several new editions of each, and led to the translation, by degrees, of all the other theological works of our author, so that now there is not one but what has been rendered into the English language, and some of the larger ones have passed through several editions. There is reason to suppose, from the great demand for these publications, that they soon became very generally read throughout the kingdom; as it is a fact, that a Society of Gentlemen, in Manchester, only formed for the purpose of publishing and circulating them, have printed, in the course of a few years, upwards of 16,000 copies, as appears from the annual reports of the Society. Various societies have also been formed in different parts of England, for reading and discoursing on these writings; and in some of the principal cities and towns, as in *London, Bristol, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Hull, Bolton*, and some other smaller towns, places of worship have been opened for the more public circulation of the doctrines contained in those writings, from the pulpit.

**DISTINGUISHING DOCTRINES.**—The *first* and principal distinguishing doctrine, contained in

the writings of Baron Swedenborg, and maintained by his followers, relates to the person and character of JESUS CHRIST, and to the redemption wrought by that GREAT SAVIOUR. On this subject, it is insisted, that JESUS CHRIST IS JEHOVAH, manifested in the flesh, and that he came into the world to glorify his human nature, by making it one with the Divine. It is therefore insisted further, that the *humanity* of JESUS CHRIST is itself divine, by virtue of its indissoluble union with the indwelling Father, agreeable with the testimony of Saint Paul, that, “*In Jesus Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,*” Coloss. ii. 9; and that thus, as to his humanity, He is the Mediator between God and man, since there is now no other medium of God’s access to man, or of man’s access to God, but this DIVINE HUMANITY, which was assumed for this purpose. Thus it is taught, that in the person of JESUS CHRIST dwells the whole Trinity of FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT, the Father constituting the soul of the above humanity, whilst the humanity itself is the Son, and the divine virtue, or operation proceeding from it, is the Holy Spirit, forming altogether one God, just as the soul, the body, and operation of man, form one man.\*

On the subject of the redemption wrought by this Incarnate God, it is lastly taught, that it

\* See above, vol. ii. p. 121, or *The Christian Observer* for May, 1807, p. 329.

consisted not in the vicarious sacrifice of one God, as some conceive, to satisfy the justice, or, as others express it, to appease the wrath of another God, but in the real subjugation of the powers of darkness, and their removal from man, by continual combats and victories over them, during his abode in the world; and in the consequent descent to man of divine power and life, which was brought near to him in the thus glorified humanity of this combating God. The receivers, therefore, of this testimony concerning JESUS CHRIST, acknowledge no other God but him, and believe, that, in approaching his DIVINE HUMANITY, they approach at the same time, and have communication with all the fulness of the Godhead, seeing and worshipping the invisible in the visible, agreeable to the tenor of those words of JESUS CHRIST: “*He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me; and he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.*” John xii. 44, 45.

2. The *second* distinguishing doctrine, taught by the same author, relates to the sacred Scripture, or word of God, which is maintained to be divinely inspired throughout, and consequently to be the repository of the whole will and wisdom of the MOST HIGH GOD. But then it is insisted, that this will and wisdom are not, in all places, discoverable from the letter or history of the sacred pages, but lie deeply concealed under the letter. For it is taught by the author under consideration, that the sense of the letter of the holy word, is the

*basis*, the *continent*, and the *firmament* of its spiritual and celestial senses, being written according to the doctrine of correspondencies between things spiritual and things natural; and thus designed by the MOST HIGH as the vehicle of communication of the eternal spiritual truths of his kingdom to the minds of men. This doctrine of correspondencies is much insisted and enlarged on in the theological writings of Baron Swedenborg, especially in his *ARCANA CÆLESTIA*, and *APOCALYPSE REVEALED*, in which works, it is applied as a key to unlock all the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge contained in the historical books of *Genesis*, *Exodus*, and the *Revelations*. It is further endeavoured to be shewn, that JESUS CHRIST spake continually according to this same doctrine, veiling divine and spiritual truths under natural images, especially in his parables, and thus communicating to man the most important mysteries relative to himself and his kingdom, under the most beautiful and edifying figures, taken from the natural things of this world. Thus, according to Baron Swedenborg, even the historical parts both of the Old and New Testament, contain vast stores of important and spiritual wisdom under the outward letter; and this consideration, as he farther asserts, justifies the pages of divine revelation, even in those parts which, to a common observer, appear trifling, nugatory, and contradictory. It is lastly maintained on this subject, that the sacred Scripture, or word of God, is the only medium of communication and conjunction between

God and man, and is likewise the only source of all genuine truth and knowledge respecting God, his kingdom, and operation, and the only sure guide for man's understanding, in whatsoever relates to his spiritual or eternal concerns. And here it may not be improper to observe, that, by the respect paid to the guidance derived from the sacred pages, a striking line of distinction is drawn between this our author and the common enthusiasts of the day, since it is notorious that the latter are perpetually leading their deluded disciples to depend on the dictates of spirits, in preference to the precepts of the eternal truth; whereas Baron Swedenborg is perpetually pointing out the great danger of such leading, and calling all his readers to be taught of God, by and through the precepts of his holy word, intellectually and rationally comprehended.

3. A *third* distinguishing doctrine, which marks the character of the writings of Baron Swedenborg, is the doctrine relative to life, or to that rule of conduct on the part of man which is truly acceptable to the Deity, and at the same time conducive to man's eternal happiness and salvation, by conjoining him with his God. This rule is taught to be simply this, *to shun all known evils as sins against God, and at the same time to love, to cherish, and to practise whatsoever is wise, virtuous, and holy, as being most agreeable to the will of God, and to the Spirit of his precepts.* On this subject it is strongly and repeatedly insisted, that evil must of

necessity remain with man, and prove his eternal destruction, unless it be removed by sincere repentance, leading him to note what is disorderly in his own mind and life; and when he has discovered it, to fight resolutely against its influence, in dependence on the aid and grace of *Jesus Christ*. It is insisted further, that this opposition to evil ought to be grounded on the consideration, that *all evil is sin against God*, since, if evil be combated from any inferior motive, it is not radically removed, but only *concealed*, and on that account is even more dangerous and destructive than before. It is added, that when man has done the work of repentance, by shunning his hereditary evils as sins against God, he ought to set himself to the practice of what is wise and good by a faithful, diligent, and conscientious discharge of all the duties of his station; by which means his mind is preserved from a return of the powers of disorder, and kept in the order of heaven, and the fulfilment of the great law of charity. For it is perpetually maintained in the writings of Baron Swedenborg, that the *essence* of charity consists in man's loving his neighbour as himself, and that its principal *operation* consists in every one's discharging the relative duties which he owes to society, by acting uprightly, and in the fear of God, in his particular employment, whether it be that of a priest, a judge, a soldier, a gentleman, a merchant, or a mechanic. This idea of charity is grounded in the consideration, that the society in which a man lives, and especially his country, and the church of God, are more properly

his neighbour than any individual, and that consequently the highest act of charity is that which is exercised on those aggregate bodies of men, by a conscientious performance of the offices annexed to his particular function.

4. A *fourth* distinguishing doctrine, inculcated in the same writings, is the doctrine of *Co-operation*, on the part of man, with the Divine Grace or agency of JESUS CHRIST. On this subject it is insisted, that man ought not indolently to hang down his hands, under the idle expectation that God will do every thing for him in the way of Purification and Regeneration, without any exertion of his own; but that he is bound, by the above law of co-operation, to *exert himself*, as if the whole progress of his purification and regeneration depended entirely on his own exertions; yet, in exerting himself, he is continually to recollect, and humbly acknowledge, that all his power to do so is from above, agreeable to the declaration of JESUS CHRIST, “*Without Me ye can do nothing;*” (John xv. 5.) He is therefore bound, according to this law, to enter freely on the great work of self-examination, and with the same freedom to reject the evils which such examination discovers to his view; also to fulfil freely the duties of his station, of whatsoever kind they be. This law is shewn to be grounded on these two distinct considerations, first, the consideration, of the *freedom* with which man is perpetually invested, either to work *with* God or to work *against*

him; and, secondly, the consideration, that all conjunction between God and man must needs be *reciprocal*, or *mutual*, agreeable to those words of JESUS CHRIST, where he says, “*Abide in me, and I in you,*” (John xv. 4.) It is therefore shewn, that, without perpetual *freedom* on the part of man, he would not be a *man*, but a *machine*, consequently incapable of living in conjunction with his Heavenly Father. And it is further shewn, that, to effect this conjunction, it is not sufficient that JESUS CHRIST be in the will and purpose to accomplish it, or that he *abides in* his disciples, but it is necessary also that his disciples be mutually on their part in the will and purpose to accomplish it also, or that they should reciprocally *abide in HIM*. Lastly, it is insisted, on this interesting subject, that the doctrine of co-operation supplies no ground for the establishment of man’s *merit* and *independence on the divine aid*, since it is continually taught in the writings in question, that all man’s freedom, as well as all his power of co-operation, is the perpetual gift of the most merciful and gracious God, consequently that all merit, properly so called, belongs to JESUS CHRIST alone, and nothing at all to man.

5. A *fifth*, and last distinguishing doctrine, taught in the theological writings of our author, relates to man’s connexion with the other world, and its various inhabitants. On this subject it is insisted, not only from the authority of the sacred Scriptures, but also from the experience of the author



himself, that every man is in continual association with Angels and Spirits, and that without such association he could not possibly think, or exert any living faculty. It is insisted further, that man, according to his life in the world, takes up his eternal abode, either with angels of light, or with the spirits of darkness; with the former, if he is wise to live according to the precepts of God's holy word, or with the latter, if through folly and transgression, he rejects the counsel and guidance of the Most High.

The author's experimental testimony on the subject is delivered very minutely in his *Treatise on Heaven and Hell*, and is likewise occasionally adverted to in most of his other writings, forming all together, with those who can receive it, a most weighty demonstration of the existence of another world, also of its laws and government, and especially of man's interesting connexion with it during his abode in this world. It is however to be noted, that this experimental testimony is never made the ground of the revelation of any new law for the guidance of man's life, because it is abundantly shewn that the word of God is completely competent to that purpose, containing every information which it is necessary for man to know in order to secure eternal happiness. It is further to be noted, that an intercourse with the other world, similar to to what was enjoyed by the author himself, is never insisted on as necessary or even expedient for others, since it is shewn that the guidance of heavenly truth, derived from the word of God, is to be

regarded as infinitely superior to every other knowledge, whether derived from visions like those of the prophets of old, or from a spiritual intercourse, resembling that which distinguished the author.


Some other peculiar doctrines of lesser importance, might be enlarged on in this place, if it was deemed necessary, such as—the Doctrine concerning the *human soul*, as being in a human form;—the Doctrine concerning *the marriage of the good and the true*, as existing in the Holy Word, and in all things in nature;—the Doctrine of the *Divine Providence*, as extending to things most minute, respecting man and the world which he inhabits;—the Doctrine concerning *the earths in the universe*, by which it is taught that all the planets in our system, and in other systems, unconnected with our sun, are inhabited by human beings; but to expatiate on these several doctrines might be thought tedious.

WORSHIP, RITES, AND CEREMONIES.—It was observed above, that in London, and some of the other cities and great towns in England, places of public worship have been opened, for the express purpose of preaching the above doctrines, and of offering up supplications to the Divine Being, and celebrating his praises. In all such places, particular forms of prayer have been adopted, in agreement with the ideas of the worshippers, as grounded in the religious sentiments above stated, especially respecting the Supreme Object of adoration, who is acknowledged to be

the Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, in his Divine Humanity.\* But in no place have any peculiar rites and ceremonies been introduced, the worshippers being content with retaining the celebration of the two sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Supper, since no other rites are insisted on by the author whose testimony they receive.

#### CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE.—

It does not appear that on this subject any thing has been either recommended by Baron Swedenborg, or adopted by the receivers of his doctrines. For it is believed by a large majority of those receivers, and particularly by a numerous body of the clergy of the Church of England, who are disposed to think favourably of our author's testimo-


\*  The members of the *New Jerusalem Church*, published a liturgy in 1801, or 1802, grounded chiefly on the Liturgy of the Church of England; but, among many other alterations, the following Doxology is used instead of the *Gloria Patri*:—" *Minister.* To Jesus Christ be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. *Answer.* He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty. Amen."


Some Observations on this Liturgy, and on the *Tenets of what is called, The New Jerusalem Dispensation*, may be seen in the *Orthodox Churchman's Magazine*, for March 1802.

In the selection of their Hymns, by Joseph Proud of Birmingham, to this line of Hymn 17th, "Our God is man alone," the following note is added:—"By man alone, understand that God is the only man, strictly speaking, as all mankind are men from him, and not in themselves. See E. S."

ny,\* that it was never his intention that any particular sect should be formed upon his doctrines, but that all who receive them, whether in the establishment, or in any other communion of Christians, should be at perfect liberty, either to continue in their former communion, or to quit it, as their conscience dictates.† Accordingly the above-mentioned numerous body of the clergy, together with many individuals of their respective congregations, who are receivers of the above doctrines, think it proper still to continue in the use of the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, and under the episcopal government established in that church.

COUNTRES WHERE FOUND, AND NUMBERS.—England appears to have been the country where the above doctrines have been most generally received; nevertheless there are numerous readers of those doctrines both in Wales, Ireland, France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Russia; also in America and the West India Islands. At Copenhagen, it is well known, a magnificent church has


\*  On this candid acknowledgment I presume not to make any comments, as many of those concerned, I can readily believe, are much older and wiser than myself, and at the same time much better able to reconcile the tenets of Baron Swedenborg with the articles of the Church of England, than I can possibly do for them.


†  The Baron is said to have always professed the highest respect for the Church of England; but he lived and died in the Lutheran Communion.

been lately built for the propagating of those doctrines, as likewise at Baltimore, in North America. In regard to the numbers of the favourers of the above doctrines, it is impossible to ascertain them with any tolerable degree of correctness, especially as the majority of them do not think it right to separate themselves from that church communion in which they have been educated; but, from the increasing demand for the publications which contain those doctrines, there is every reason to believe the number of readers to be large and increasing. At least, it is a fact, that this is the case in the town of Manchester and its vicinity, where the number of proselytes to the testimony of Baron Swedenborg has of late years swelled to a large amount, so as at present to be calculated at several thousands.

WRITERS PRO ET CON. &c.—The three principal writers, who have opposed the theological tenets of Baron Swedenborg, are *Dr. Priestley*, the *Abbé Barruel*, and the *Editor of the Christian Observer*. *Dr. Priestley* published his objections about the year 1791, in one small octavo volume, entitled, *Letters to the Members of the New Jerusalem Church at Birmingham*. His principal objection was to the doctrine which asserts the exclusive divinity of JESUS CHRIST, and he combats this doctrine with all the weight of those Socinian arguments which were so familiar to him. His objections were answered immediately in a very


able manner, by the *Rev. J. Proud*,\* the present minister of York Street Chapel, St. James's Square, Westminster, and in the following year, in a still more diffuse and more elaborate manner, by *Mr. Robert Hindmarsh*, who was at that time a printer in London, whose reply was entitled, *Letters to Dr. Priestley, in answer to his Letters to the Members of the New Jerusalem Church at Birmingham*. The next opponent to the above doctrines was the Abbé Barruel, who, in the fourth volume of his *Memoirs of Jacobinism*, inserted a violent invective against Baron Swedenborg and his tenets, endeavouring to prove him to be an *impostor*, a *madman*, an *atheist*, a *materialist*, and an *enemy to all government both civil and ecclesiastical*.† His calumnies were presently refuted by the *Rev. J. Clowes*, Rector of St. John's, Manchester, and late fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, in a work, entitled, *Letters to a Member of Parliament, on the Character and Writings of Baron Swedenborg, containing a full and complete Refutation of all the Abbé Barruel's Calumnies against the Honourable Author*, in one volume octavo. The last antagonist of our author was the *Editor of the Christian Observer*, who published his attack in that periodical work, for the Month of June 1806, under the title of *Observations on a Small Work*,

\*  Formerly a *General Baptist* Minister.

†  Mr. Reid also seems to have much the same opinion of this author and his tenets.—See his work *on the Rise and Fall of Infidel Societies*, p. 53, &c.


entitled, *A few plain Answers to the Question, Why do you receive the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg? Addressed from a Minister to his Congregation, by the Rev. J. Clowes.*\* This attack the reverend author of the *Plain Answers*, endeavoured to repel, in a small pamphlet, entitled, *Letters to the Christian Observer, in Reply to their Remarks on his Publication*, in which Letters the following subjects are discussed, 1. *The Person and Character of Jesus Christ, as being exclusively the God of Heaven and Earth.* 2. *The Internal Sense of the Sacred Scriptures.* 3. *Justification.* 4. *The extraordinary Mission of Baron Swedenborg, as an Expositor of the Sacred Scriptures, and as a Seer.*

Amongst the assertors of the truth of the testimony of Baron Swedenborg, ought also to be mentioned the *Rev. T. Hartley*, Rector of Winwick, in Northamptonshire, a man of profound piety and learning, who vindicated the character of our author, and the tendency of his writings, in two prefaces to the *Treatises on Heaven and Hell*, and *on Influx*, accompanied with various notes and observations; also in a Letter to the Translator of the *True Christian Religion*, which stands annexed as a preface to the English translation of that work.

\*  See also “*A Letter of Exhortation and Admonition to all who receive the Testimony of E. Swedenborg.*” Supposed by some to be unanswerable, and to have been written by C. Baldwyn, Esq. of Manchester. It was replied to by Mr. Clowes, and the letter was reprinted in London, together with a Vindication, in 1783.

The names likewise of the *Abbé Perneti*, librarian to the King of Prussia, and of the *Rev. Dr. Beyer*, of Gottenburg, ought not to be overlooked on this occasion, since they were both of them very able and strenuous advocates in favour of the character and doctrines of Swedenborg, the former having published his remarks in the preliminary discourse prefixed to his French translation of the *Treatise on Heaven and Hell*; and the latter having manifested his partiality for the doctrines, by composing and publishing three copious indexes, in one volume quarto, of all the matter contained in the theological writings of our author, and of all the Scripture passages referred to and elucidated in those writings.

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.—We have only to observe on the subject of this article, that the doctrines under consideration, if true, must needs be acknowledged to be of the utmost importance to the general interests of mankind. Some persons, it is plain, will be disposed to doubt their credibility, on the ground of the utter improbability, that a mortal man, during his residence in a material body, should have been permitted to enjoy open intercourse with the world of departed spirits, during the uninterrupted period of twenty-seven years, and to have been instructed, during that period, in the internal sense of the Sacred Scriptures, hitherto undiscovered.\* Others again,

\*  Baron S. seems to have had many theological eccentricities; but perhaps the most remarkable circumstance



(as appears from many respectable instances, both amongst the laity and the clergy) will see nothing improbable in all this, referring the case to those extraordinary dispensations of the providence of an All-wise and All-Powerful Being, who, in all ages of the world, has been pleased to enlighten and instruct chosen servants concerning his will and kingdom. At all events, it is beyond a doubt, that every well-disposed Christian is bound by every obligation of good conscience, to take the above testimony into serious consideration, and not to decide upon it, until he has weighed it impartially in the scale of his best judgment, and in the fear of God, following the prudent counsel of the Jewish Doctor, on a similar occasion, where it is written, “*If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.*” (Acts, v. 38, 39.)

respecting him, is this correspondence, which he asserted he maintained with the world of Spirits;—a correspondence which few or no writers, before or since his time, ever pretended to, if we except the Arabian Prophet.

## SABBATARIANS.

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NAMES AND RISE.—The Sabbatarians are so called from their keeping the *seventh* day of the week as the Sabbath; whereas Christians in general keep the *first* day of the week, or Sunday, in memory of our Saviour's having on that day risen from the dead.\* On the continent they are generally, but improperly, called *Israelites*.

I am not aware when they first made their appearance in the Protestant Church; but we learn from Fuller that there were Sabbatarians in 1633.

\* Even the first day of the week is sometimes called the *Sabbath Day*, as being substituted in the room of the Jewish Sabbath; but the ancients retained the name *Sunday*, or *Dies Solis*, (which is now more generally in use), in compliance with the ordinary forms of speech, the first day of the week being so called by the Romans, because it was dedicated to the worship of the Sun.

**DISTINGUISHING TENET.**—The common reasons why Christians in general observe the *first* day of the week as the Sabbath are ;—that on this day Christ rose from the dead, and the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles ;—that on it they assembled, preached, administered the Lord's Supper, and made public collections for the support of the poor and distressed disciples ;—and, because it has been kept holy by the church for many ages, if not from the days of the apostles.\*

They perceive the Christian Sabbath to have its grounds in Scripture, in the example and practice, if not command, of the apostles themselves ; and they believe that the change of the day by them, from the *seventh* to the *first*, without any alteration that we know of, as to the main purpose and design of it, virtually implies, if not proves, a command for its continuance, as it has accordingly been continued and observed from the primitive times through all succeeding ages of the Church,

\* The most ancient Christian writers assure us, that the observation of the *first* day of the week prevailed early and constantly in the church. Thus, Ignatius calls it *the Queen of Days* ; and Melito wrote a book concerning it. Justin Martyr and Tertullian, in their *Apologies*, speak very expressly of stated Christian assemblies held on this day, not to mention Clemens Alexandrinus, and many more. Pliny likewise speaks of it as the sacred day of the Christians, a very few years after the death of St. John. Now, is it likely that such an observation should have so early and so universally prevailed, (for it does not appear that it was then disputed), had not the Apostles directed to it ?

because the chief ends of its institution are always, and ever will be, the same.

The Sabbatarians, however, think these reasons unsatisfactory, and insist that the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, did not take place till the beginning of the fourth century, when it was effected by the emperor Constantine, on his conversion to Christianity.

A summary of their principles, as to this article of the Sabbath, by which they stand distinguished, is contained in the three following propositions:—

1st, That God hath required the observation of the seventh, or last day of every week, to be observed by mankind universally for the weekly sabbath.

2d, That this command of God is perpetually binding on man till time shall be no more.

And, 3d, That this sacred rest of the seventh day Sabbath is not changed, by divine authority, from the seventh and last to the first day of the week; or, that the scripture doth no where require the observation of any other day of the week, for the weekly Sabbath, but the seventh day only, which is still kept by the Jews, to whom the law on this subject was given.

The Sabbatarians are to be found chiefly, if not wholly, among the Baptists, whence they are sometimes called the *Seventh-Day Baptists*; and they hold, in other respects, the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity, in common with other

Christians. Some of them keep our Sunday, or the *first* day of the week, as well as the Jewish Sabbath or Saturday; and indeed both these days were days of assembling, and were long held in great veneration among the primitive Christians. The ancient canons seem to have made them equal, by equally prohibiting fasts on either of them. Thus,—“Celebrate,” (says the book of ancient *Constitutions*, that goes under the name of *Clement*), “celebrate both Saturday and Sunday as festivals; the one being consecrated to the memory of the creation, and the other to that of the resurrection.”

#### NUMBERS, AND COUNTRIES WHERE FOUND.

—The Sabbatarians are but few in number, but they deserve to be distinctly noticed in a work of this nature, on account of their integrity and respectability.—There are two congregations of them in London; one among the *General Baptists*, meeting in *Mill-Yard*, the other among the *Particular Baptists* in *Cripple-Gate*.—There is also a family or small society of them in the neighbourhood of Oxford, and a few to be found in some other parts of the kingdom. They are to be met with in various parts of the continent; and it appears that our Saturday and Sunday are both kept holy by the Abyssinian Christians, and some members of the Greek Church.

We are told by Mr. Morse, in his “*American Geography*,” that there are many Sabbatarians likewise in America; as in Rhode Island and New

Jersey: and that their doctrine is held by the remains of the *Keithian*, or *Quaker Baptists*, and by the *Dunkers*, or one congregation of *Dunkers*, at *Ephrata*, in Pennsylvania.

AUTHORS PRO ET CON.—This tenet has given rise, it seems, to various controversies, and writers of considerable ability have appeared on both sides of the question.

Mr. Cornthwaite, a respectable minister of this sect or party, published about the year 1740, several tracts in support of it, which may be consulted by those who wish to obtain more full satisfaction on the subject. The reader may also have recourse to Dr. Jennings's *Jewish Antiquities*, vol. ii., book iii. chap. 3.;—Dr. Chandler's two discourses on the *Sabbath*; Mr. Amner's "*Dissertation on the Weekly Festival of the Christian Church*;"—Dr. Kinnicott's "*Sermon and Dialogue on the Sabbath*;" and Mr. Orton's "*Six Discourses on the Religious Observation of the Lord's Day*."

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.—The advocates for the change of the Sabbath, from the seventh to the first day of the week, insist that it is merely circumstantial, and does not interfere with the essence of the command. Our regards are not diverted from the due consideration of what we owe to God for creating us, by the alteration of the day appropriated to the Sabbath, though we are thereby directed to the celebration of a blessing superior to that of Creation.

Both parties in this question will no doubt admit, that every circumstance, in the present situation of mankind, loudly calls for such an institution as the Sabbath; and particularly, that, without stated periods for the public worship of God, and other religious exercises, religion would soon be banished out of the world. To break the Sabbath, therefore, is in effect to reject religion, and to renounce the important benefits and blessings which it is intended to convey. Other sins are committed against particular branches of duty, but breaking the Sabbath or Sunday, saps the foundation of all duty, and undermines the whole fabric of religion.

It will also be acknowledged by both parties, that the motives to love, worship, and serve God are increased under the gospel dispensation; it might therefore be reasonably expected, that the character of pious Christians should be somewhat superior to that of pious Jews;—that our clearer views of the inestimable love of God in our redemption, and of our infinite obligations to the Redeemer, should produce greater delight in those holy exercises, which are so well calculated to call forth our gratitude and excite our love;—and, that the restrictions and employments of the Sabbath should be more binding under the Christian, than under the Jewish dispensation.\*

It might also be expected, (and it will doubtless be universally admitted,) that those employ-

\* See above, vol. i. p. 76, note \*.

ments should at the same time be more *spiritual*:— Both parties should therefore bear in mind that, it is not the outward observance of the Sabbath, whether on the first or the seventh day of the week, however strict, that should be their object, but the spirit and temper which that observance indicates and requires. It is the substance of religion, not the form only, which we should strive to possess. Its power or substance may be said to consist in the faith and fear of God, our Creator—the love of Christ, our Redeemer,—a faithful obedience to the law of God—a dutiful submission to his will,—regulation of the heart and temper, as well as of the outward conduct, together with a regular use of all the means of grace, that so we may obtain the grace and aid of the Holy Spirit, to bring us into this state, to keep us in the same, and thus enable us to walk worthy of our Christian vocation.

Such are the good things which the Sabbath or Sunday, and Sunday duties, were designed to communicate; and by producing these, the wisdom of the institution will be manifested, and we shall be thereby prepared for, and finally admitted to the enjoyment of, that other *Sabbath*, which this day of rest was meant to prefigure,—that *rest* which remaineth “for the people of God.”



## MYSTICS.

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NAMES.—The Mystics, who have also been sometimes called *Quietists*, are those who profess a pure and sublime devotion, accompanied with a disinterested love of God, free from all selfish considerations; and who believe that the Scriptures have a *mystic and hidden sense*, which must be sought after, in order to understand their true import.

Under this name some comprehend all those that profess to know how they are inwardly taught of God.

RISE, PROGRESS, &c.—The authors of Mysticism, which sprung up so early as the 2d century, or, at latest, towards the close of the third, are not known; but the principles from which it was formed may readily be ascertained. Its first promoters proceeded upon the known doc-

trine of the Platonic School, which was also adopted by Origen and his disciples, that “the divine nature was diffused through all human souls;” or that the faculty of reason, from which proceed the health and vigour of the mind, was “an emanation from God into the human soul, and comprehended in it the principles and elements of all truth, human and divine.” They denied that men could, by labour or study, excite this celestial flame in their breasts; and, therefore, they disapproved highly of the attempts of those who, by definitions, abstract theorems, and profound speculations, endeavoured to form distinct notions of truth, and to discover its hidden nature. On the contrary, they maintained that silence, tranquillity, repose, and solitude, accompanied with such acts as might tend to extenuate and exhaust the body, were the means by which the hidden and internal word was excited to produce its latent virtues, and to instruct men in the knowledge of divine things. For thus they reasoned:—Those “who behold, with a noble contempt, all human affairs,—who turn away their eyes from terrestrial vanities, and shut all the avenues of the outward senses against the contagious influences of a material world, must necessarily return to God, when the spirit is thus disengaged from the impediments that prevented that happy union. And, in this blessed frame, they not only enjoy inexpressible raptures from that communion with the Supreme Being, but also are invested with the inestimable privilege of contemplating truth undisguised and uncorrupted in its native

purity, while others behold it in a vitiated and delusive form.”

The number of the Mystics increased in the fourth century, under the influence of the Grecian fanatic, who gave himself out for *Dionysius the Areopagite*, disciple of St. Paul, and probably lived about this period; and, by pretending to higher degrees of perfection than other Christians, and practising great austerities, their cause gained ground, especially in the eastern provinces, in the fifth century. A copy of the pretended works of Dionysius was sent by Balbus to Lewis the Meek, in the year 824, which kindled the holy flame of Mysticism in the Western provinces, and filled the Latins with the most enthusiastic admiration of this new religion.—In the 12th century, these Mystics took the lead in their method of expounding the Scriptures.—In the 13th they were the most formidable antagonists of the Schoolmen; and, towards the close of the 14th, many of them resided and propagated their tenets almost in every part of Europe.—They had, in the 15th century, many persons of distinguished merit in their number;—in the 16th, previous to the Reformation, if any sparks of real piety subsisted under the despotic empire of superstition, they were chiefly to be found among the Mystics;—and in the 17th, the radical principle of Mysticism was adopted by the *Bohemists*, *Bourignonists*, and *Quietists*.

**DISTINGUISHING TENETS.**—The Mystics propose a disinterestedness of love, without other

motives, and profess to feel, in the enjoyment of the temper itself, an abundant reward; and passive contemplation is the state of perfection to which they aspire. They lay little or no stress on the outward ceremonies and ordinances of religion, but dwell chiefly upon the *inward operations* of the mind.

It is not uncommon for them to allegorise certain passages of Scripture, at the same time not denying the literal sense, as having an allusion to the inward experience of believers. Thus, “according to them, the word *Jerusalem*, which is the name of the capital of Judea, signifies, *allegorically*, the church militant,—*morally*, a believer, and *mysteriously*, heaven.

“That sublime passage also in Genesis, ‘Let there be light, and there was light,’ which is according to the letter, corporeal light, signifies, *allegorically*, the Messiah, *morally*, grace, and *mysteriously*, beatitude, or the light of glory.”

All this appears to be harmless, “*sed est modus in rebus*,” &c., we must be careful not to give way to the sallies of a lively imagination in interpreting Scripture.—Woolston is said to have been led to reject the Old Testament, by spiritualising and allegorising the new.\*

COUNTRIES WHERE FOUND, EMINENT MEN, &c.—The Mystics are not confined to any parti-

\* See above, vol. II, p. 272.

cular denomination of Christians, but may be found in most countries, and among many descriptions of religionists; especially among the adherents to the *Church of Rome*,—*The Quakers*,—*The Moravians*,—*the Methodists*,—*the Swedenborgians*, &c. &c.

Among the number of Mystics, may be ranked many singular characters, especially *Behmen*, originally a shoemaker at *Gorlitz*, in Germany,—*Molinos*, a Spanish priest, in the 17th century,\* *Madam Guyon*, a French lady, who made a great noise in the religious world, and the celebrated *Madam Bourignon*, who wrote a work, entitled, “*The Light of the World*,” which is full of Mystic extravagancies. *Fenelon* also, the learned and amiable Archbishop of *Cambray*, favoured the same sentiments, for which he was reprimanded by the Pope. His book, entitled “*An Explication of the Maxims of the Saints*,” which abounded with Mystical sentiments, was condemned, and to the Pope’s sentence against him, the good Archbishop submitted quietly, and even read it publicly himself in his cathedral of *Cambray*. In this whole affair, his chief opponent is said to have been the famous *Bossuet*, bishop of *Meaux*.

Mr. William Law, author of the “*Serious Call*,” &c., and the very able opponent of Bishop *Hoadley*,

\* Author of a work published at Rome, in 1681, under the title of *Manductio Spiritualis*, or the *Spiritual Guide*, which greatly alarmed the doctors of the Church of Rome. —It was to the followers of *Molinos*, that the name of *Quietists* seems to have been first given.

degenerated, in the latter part of his life, into all the singularities of Mysticism ; and some suppose, that his extravagant notions were one means of driving the celebrated Gibbon into a state of infidelity.

See a brief account of the outlines of Mr. Law's System in Hannah Adams's *View*. See also his Mystical works,—viz. his *Appeal*,—his *Spirit of Prayer*,—his *Spirit of Love*,—on *Christian Regeneration*, &c.

Those who are partial to the principles of Mysticism, may likewise consult Madam Guyon's *Letters* and her *Life*, in two volumes, 8vo., together with Archbishop Fenelon *On Pure Love*, and his *Life*, by the Chevalier Ramsay.

# DUNKERS,

IN

## NORTH AMERICA.

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### NAME, RISE, FOUNDER, AND SETTLEMENT.

—This sect, whose members are also called *Tunkers*, and sometimes *Dumplers*,\* and who are a sort of monks or hermits, was founded about 1724, by *Conrad Peysel*, a German, who, weary of the world, retired to an agreeable solitude, within 50 miles of Philadelphia, in order to be more at liberty to give himself up to contemplation. Curiosity brought several of his countrymen to visit his re-

\* This denomination seem to have obtained their name of *Dunkers*, “from their baptising their new converts by plunging. They are also called *Tumblers*, from the manner in which they performed baptism, which is, by putting the person, while kneeling, head first under the water, so as to resemble the motion of the body in the action of tumbling.”

—Hannah Adams’s *Views*.

treat, and, by degrees, his pious, simple, and peaceable manners induced others to settle near him; and they all formed a little colony of German Baptists, which they called *Euphrata*, or *Euphrates*, in allusion to the Hebrews, who used to sing psalms on the border of that river. This little city forms a triangle, the outsides of which are bordered with mulberry and apple-trees, planted with great regularity; in the middle is a very large orchard, and between the orchard and these ranges of trees, are houses built of wood, three stories high, where every Dunker is left to enjoy the pleasures of his meditation without disturbance.

These contemplative men did not amount, in 1777, to above 500 in all; their territory was then about 250 acres in extent, the boundaries of which are marked by a river, a piece of stagnated water, and a mountain covered with trees.

PECULIARITIES.—The men and women live in separate quarters of the town, and have distinct governments, and, according to some, even different apartments for public worship. Others say, that they never see each other but at places of public worship, and that there are no other assemblies among them of any kind, but for public business.

Their life is spent in labour, prayer, and sleep. Twice every day and night they are called forth from their cells, to attend divine service; and even the Dean or Prior himself is said to go to church



regularly at midnight. Like the Methodists and Quakers, they allow any individual among them to preach who may think himself inspired; and the favourite subjects on which they discourse in their assemblies, are humility, temperance, chastity, and the other Christian graces.

They are strict observers of the Sabbath, and some of them keep the *seventh* day. They never allow any law-suits. One may cheat, rob, and abuse them without ever being exposed to any retaliation, or even to any complaint from them. Religion seems to have the same effect upon them that philosophy had upon the Stoics, making them insensible to every kind of insult; and hence they are sometimes called the *Harmless Dunkers*.

Nothing can be plainer than their dress, which appears to be peculiar to themselves, and yet not unlike to that of the Dominican Friars, in the Church of Rome. It consists of a long white tunic, or coat, reaching down to their heels, with a sash, or leathern girdle, round their waist, and a cap, or hood, hanging from the shoulders, which serves instead of a hat; thick shoes, and very wide breeches. The only difference in winter is, that grey woollen cloth is used instead of linen; and the women are dressed much like the men, except that they do not wear breeches. The men never shave the head or beard.

Their common food consists chiefly of roots and other vegetables; not because they think it un-

lawful to eat any other, but because that kind of abstinence is looked upon as more conformable to the spirit of Christianity, which, say they, has an aversion to blood. On particular occasions, however, when they hold what they call a *love-feast*, the brethren and sisters dine together, and eat mutton, but no other kind of meat. It is said, that no bed is allowed them, but in case of sickness; having each, in their separate cells, only a bench to lie upon, and a small block of wood for their pillow. Each individual follows with cheerfulness the branch of business allotted to him, and the produce of their labour is deposited in a common stock, in order to supply the necessities of every member. This union of industry has not only established all the arts necessary for the support of this little society, but hath also supplied, for the purpose of exchange, superfluities proportioned to the degree of its population.

Though the sexes live separate, the Dunkers do not, on that account, foolishly renounce matrimony, and live as mere monks, as some have asserted;\* but those who find themselves disposed to it, leave the town, and form an establishment in the country, which is supplied at the public expense. They afterwards repay this by the produce of their labours, which is all thrown into the public treasury, and their children are all sent to be educated in the mother country.

\* Hannah Adams's *View*, and *Christian Observer*, for 1808, p. 167.

**DISTINGUISHING TENETS.**—As to the doctrines of the Dunkers, they seem to be a medley of the tenets of the Baptists, Universalists, Calvinists, Lutherans, Jews, Methodists, and Roman Catholics. They lament the fall of our first parent, which, say they, might have been prevented, had Adam preferred to Eve for his wife, the celestial Sophia; but they deny the imputation of his sin to his posterity.

They use the trine immersion in Baptism, with the laying on of hands, and prayer, even when the person baptised is in the water. They deny the eternity of future punishments, and believe that the dead have the gospel preached to them by our Saviour; and that the souls of the just are employed to preach the gospel to those who have had no revelation in this life.

But their principal tenet appears to be this:—That future happiness is only to be obtained by penance and outward mortification in this life; and that, as Jesus Christ, by his meritorious sufferings, became the redeemer of mankind in general, so each individual of the human race, by a life of abstinence and restraint, may work out his own salvation. Nay, they go so far as to admit of works of supererogation, and declare, that a man may do much more than he is in justice or equity obliged to do, and that his superabundant works may therefore be applied for the salvation of others.

They use the same form of government and

the same discipline, as the English Baptists, except that every person is allowed to speak in the congregation, and their best speaker is usually ordained to be their minister. They have also Deacons and Deaconesses from among their ancient widows, who may all use their gifts, and exhort at stated times.

COUNTRY WHERE FOUND, &c.—This sect is peculiar to America; nay, the Dunkers are confined to *Euphrata*, or, at least, to the neighbourhood of Pennsylvania, and to Upper Canada, where a few of them now reside.\*

The reader will no doubt be pleased with the following account of this sect, as given by Mr. Winchester in his *Dialogues*, where he adduces their example to prove, that “the belief of the doctrine of the *Universal Restoration* does not lead men to sin.”

“The Dunkers,” says he, “or German Baptists in Pennsylvania, and the states adjacent, who take the Scriptures as their only guide, in matters both of faith and practice, have always, (as far as I know,) received, and universally, at present, hold these sentiments,” (of *Universal Restoration*.) “But such Christians I have never seen as they

\* Lloyd’s *Evening Post*, for September, 3—5. 1777, vol. 25, p. 228. See also the Letters of *Caspipima*, p. 70, &c. *Annual Register*, p. 343. *Review of North America*, vol. 1, p. 225. and Hannah Adams’s *Views of Religions*, art. *Dunkers*.

are; so averse are they to all sin, and to many other things, that other Christians esteem lawful, that they not only refuse to swear, go to war, &c., but are so afraid of doing any thing contrary to the commands of Christ, that no temptation would prevail upon them even to sue any person at law, for either name, character, estate, or any debt, be it ever so just. They are industrious, sober, temperate, kind, charitable people; envying not the great, nor despising the mean.

“ They read much; they sing and pray much; they are constant attendants upon the worship of God; their dwelling houses are all houses of prayer.

“ They walk in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, both in public and private. They bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, no noise of rudeness, shameless mirth, loud, vain laughter, is heard within their doors.

“ The law of kindness is in their mouths: no sourness or moroseness, disgraces their religion; and whatsoever they believe their Saviour commands, they practise, without enquiring or regarding what others do.

“ I remember the Rev. Morgan Edwards, formerly Minister of the Baptist church, in Philadelphia, once said to me, ‘ God always will have a visible people on earth; and these are his peo-

ple at present, above any other in the world.' And in his *History of the Baptists in Pennsylvania*, speaking of these people, he says, 'General Redemption, they certainly hold, and withal General Salvation; which tenets (though wrong,) are consistent.'—In a word, they are meek and pious Christians, and have justly acquired the character of *the Harmless Dunkers.*"\*

\* *The Universal Restoration, exhibited in a Series of Extracts from Winchester, &c.* p. 76.—It should also be noticed here, to the honour of the Dunkers, that, with the Quakers and others, they have professed themselves great enemies to the Slave trade.

## JUMPERS.

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NAME.—The JUMPERS, who take their name from the practice of *jumping* in their religious exercises, are one of those extravagant sects or parties, respecting which, had it accorded with my plan, I should have most gladly been silent; as to extend the knowledge of their peculiarities, is not likely to answer any good purpose, and it is difficult to speak of them with that respect with which every religious sect, that is sincere in its belief, and correct in its morals, should ever be treated.

RISE, HISTORY, &c.—This singular practice of jumping began, it is said, among the Calvinistic Methodists, the followers of *Howell*, *Harris*, *Rowland*, and others, in the western part of Wales, about the year 1760. It was soon after defended by *Mr. William Williams*, (the Welch

poet, as he is sometimes called) in a pamphlet, which was patronised by the abettors of jumping in religious assemblies, but viewed by the sober and grave with disapprobation and contempt. However, the advocates of groaning and loud talking, as well as loud singing, repeating the same line or stanza over and over thirty or forty times, became, in the course of a few years, more numerous, and were found among some of the other denominations in the principality of Wales, and continue to the present day.

The jumping tendency, however, never existed, in any degree, as far as I can learn, in those parts of South Wales where the English language is spoken; and it is now said to prevail chiefly in Cardiganshire and North Wales.

Several of the more zealous itinerant preachers encouraged the people to cry out "*gogoniant*," (the Welch word for praise or glory,) amen, &c. &c.—to put themselves in violent agitations; and, finally, to *jump* until they were quite exhausted, so as often to be obliged to fall down on the floor, or on the field, where this kind of worship was held. These scenes often continue for an hour, or hours together, and sometimes during half the night, after having produced the greatest confusion, and too often turned the solemnities of religion into the most extragant clamours and gestures.

These seem to be excited by a fervent, or rather enthusiastic method of praying, and often



by some particular phrase or expression used by the preacher, which the heated congregation repeat and vociferate aloud, as *My Saviour*, or *I wish I may see him*. Even a single word may so engross their attention perhaps for half an hour or more, that the preacher sometimes leaves them jumping, and to their own meditations and exclamations.

They always endeavour to outvie each other in jumping, which now becomes part of their devotion; and those who jump highest, think themselves nearest heaven.—In this they are no doubt right, *literally* speaking.

The Jumpers are chiefly, but not wholly, confined to Wales; for somewhat similar extravagances are said to have appeared, at times, among some religionists, in several parts of England; and we are told that something of the same spirit has also caught a congregation in Argyleshire.

They seem to have a near alliance with the sect of *Dancers*, which sprung up at *Aix-la-Chapelle*, about the year 1373, and soon spread through different parts of Flanders, whose custom it was to fall a dancing all of a sudden, and holding each others hands, to continue dancing, till, suffocated with the extraordinary violence, they fell down breathless together. During these intervals of vehement agitation, they pretended to be favoured with wonderful visions. Like the Whippers, another sect of those days, they roved from place to

place, begging their victuals, holding their secret assemblies, and treating the priesthood and services of the Church with the utmost contempt.\*

We are happy to learn, however, that the practice of *jumping* is on the decline; and it is hoped, that these people and their leaders, some of whom are no doubt men sincere in their religious profession, and piously disposed,—men who think they are doing God's service, whilst they are the victims of fanaticism, will consider that such disorderly scenes are not compatible with the service of that God, who is a God of order,—not the author of confusion, but of peace; and that they often terminate in intemperance and dissipation.

The exercise of common sense, will, we trust, “in time, recover them from these extravagant extasies, which at once pain the rational friends of Revelation, and afford matter of exultation to the advocates of infidelity.”

In the mean time, as they seem to be equally deaf to the voice of reason, and blind to the genuine influence of true religion, perhaps the best mode of dealing with them, might be to try if they are yet alive to a sense of shame, and, in combating their extravagant practice, to employ the same weapon which Elijah used against the Prophets of Baal, “when, they cried aloud, and cut themselves

\* Mosheim's *Eccles. History*, cent. 14, part 2d, chap. 5  
See also the article *Shakers* below.

after their manner, with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them."

See Evans's *Sketch*,—Evans's *Tour through Wales*,—and Bingley's *North Wales*.

The first and last of these gentlemen describe what they themselves beheld in the religious meetings of the Jumpers. The meeting at which Mr. E. was present, and which terminated in *jumping*, was held in the open air, on a Sunday evening, near *Newport*, in Monmouthshire; and that which Mr. B. repeatedly attended, was held in a chapel at *Caernarvon*. The members of both meetings were Calvinistic Methodists.

I feel equally concerned with Mr. E. that I have it not in my power to give a more favourable account of this religious party; and I unite with him in hoping that the decline of so unbecoming a practice, will "be soon followed by its utter extinction."—Or, should it still prevail, in defiance of religion, reason, and common sense, may it not extend further and wider, but be confined within the country that gave it birth:—

———" *Illa se jactet in aula,  
Æolus, et clauso ventorum carcere regnet.*"

## SHAKERS.

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NAME, RISE, AND HEAD.—The enthusiasm of this sect, which seems to be a branch of the *Welch Jumpers*, (whose peculiarities have just been considered,) and which first appeared in North America, in 1774, is vented in jumping, dancing, and violent exertions of the body, which, bringing on *shaking* or shuddering, as if under an ague, occasioned their being termed, in that country, *Shakers*.—*Anna Leese*, or *Lecos*, whom they style *the Elect Lady*, was the founder and head of their first society, at *Harvard*, Massachusetts; or, according to Hannah Adams, at *Nisqueunia*, above Albany, in the state of New York, “whence they have spread their doctrine, and increased to a considerable number.” A. Leese died in 1784, when her power devolved on *James Whitaker*, who was succeeded by *Joseph Meacham*, whom they look up to, not only as their head, but also as a *prophet*. The chief elders are his deputies and substitutes in their different settlements.

TENETS AND PECULIARITIES.—The Shakers

assert that A. Leese was the woman spoken of in the 12th chapter of the *Revelations*;—that she spoke seventy-two tongues, and that though those tongues were unintelligible to the living, she conversed with the dead, who understood her language.

They further add, that she was the mother of all the elect; that she travailed for the whole world; and that no blessing can descend to any person but only by and through her, and *that* in the way of her being possessed of their sins by confessing and repenting of them, one by one, according to her direction.

The tenets which peculiarly distinguish them are comprised in seven articles.—They believe and assert,

1st, That the first resurrection is already come; that now is the time to judge themselves; and that, under this new dispensation, the people of God are not to be guided by the written word, but by the immediate influences of the Holy Ghost.

2d, That they have power to heal the sick, to raise the dead, and to cast out devils. This they say is performed by the preaching of the word of God, when it is attended with the divine power—the wonderful energy and operation of the Holy Spirit, which performs those things, by healing the broken-hearted—raising up those who are dead in trespasses and sins to a life of holiness and righteousness, which causes the devils to be cast out. St. Matth. x. 8.

3d, That they have a correspondence with angels, the spirits of the Saints, and their departed friends. This they attempt to prove from 1 Cor. xii. 8—10.

4th, That they speak with divers kinds of tongues in their public assemblies. This they think is done by the divine power and influence of the Holy Spirit.

5th, That it is lawful to practise vocal music, with dancing, in the Christian churches, if it be practised in praising the Lord.

6th, That they, being the children of the resurrection, must neither marry nor be given in marriage; but that their church is come out of the order of natural generation, to be as Christ was; and that those who have wives be as though they had none;—that, by these means, heaven begins upon earth, &c.

They suppose that some of their people are of the number of the 144,000, *who were redeemed from the earth, that were not defiled with women.\**

7th, That the word *everlasting*, when applied to the punishment of the wicked, refers only to a limited space of time; excepting in the case of those who fall from their sect; but for such “*there is no forgiveness, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.*” To prove this, they quote St. Matth. xii. 32.

\* As marriage is prohibited by them, and married persons are admitted to become members only on condition that they renounce each other, their Society is recruited merely by proselytes.

The Shakers also maintain with the Quakers, that it is unlawful to swear, game, or use compliments to each other; and that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are abolished.

They deny the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity; and they seem to be less Calvinists in other respects likewise, than their brethren, the *Jumpers*, in Wales.

Their form of government is said to be republican, under the chief elder, whom they elect, and whose power is unlimited.

Like the Moravians, they are divided into classes, and subordinate to the chief elder are inspectors of all classes, invested with different degrees of authority.

Their discipline is founded on the supposed perfection of their leaders. Confession is made of every secret, by all, from the oldest to the youngest; and the people are made to believe that they are seen through in the gospel glass of perfection by their teachers, who behold the state of the dead, and innumerable worlds of spirits, good and bad.

They are taught to be very industrious, that they may be able to contribute to the general fund, and some are said to devote their whole substance to the Society.

They send missionaries through the country to make proselytes; and their meetings, which sometimes continue "day and night for a considerable time," are often attended by converts from a great distance, who, stay from "two to twenty days."

In these meetings they have praying, preaching, singing and dancing; the men in one apartment, the women in another.

They vary their exercises of devotion. Their heavy dancing, as it is called, is performed by a perpetual springing from the house floor, about four inches up and down, both in the men's and women's apartment, moving about with extraordinary transport, singing, sometimes one at a time, and sometimes more. They sometimes clap their hands, and leap so high as to strike the joists above their heads. This elevation affects the nerves so that they have intervals of shuddering, as if they were in a violent fit of the ague. They even throw off their outside garment in these exercises, and spend their strength very cheerfully in this way; and when their chief speaker calls for their attention, after joining in prayer with him, or listening to his harangue, they immediately renew their dancing with increased vigour.—"Sometimes there will be short intermissions, but in a minute or two one of the chiefs will spring up, crying, 'As David danced, so will we before God:' the others follow this signal; and thus alternately,



dancing, praying, and singing, they pass night after night, and often until morning.”\*

They assert, that their dancing is the token of the great joy and happiness of the Jerusalem state, and denotes the victory over sin.—One of their most favourite exertions is turning round very swiftly for an hour or two; and this, they say, is to shew the great power of God.—They sometimes fall on their knees, and make a sound like the roaring of many waters, in groans and cries to God, as they say, for the wicked world who persecute them.

Such is the account which different writers have given of this sect; but others observe, that though, at first, they used these violent gesticulations, now they have a regular, solemn, uniform *dance*, or genuflexion, to as regular, solemn, a hymn, which is sung by the elders, and as regularly conducted as a proper band of music.”

See a curious account of this sect in the first volume of *Travels through America*, by the Duke de la Rochefoucault. See also Hannah Adams's *View of Religions*, and the New York *Theological Magazine*, for November and December, 1795. Nor have they wanted more professed historians, for accounts of them have been written by *Rathburn*, *Taylor*, and *West*.

\* Janson's *Stranger in America*, 4to, 1807. Mr. J. says, that “they sing praises to David during the dancing; but I could not learn what holy man or saint they invoke in their shaking fits.”



## DEISM, AND DEISTS.

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“ Errant veluti in mari magno, nec quo feruntur intelligunt ;  
quia nec viam cernunt, nec ducem sequuntur.”

LACTANTIUS.

NAMES.—The term *Deist* comes from the Latin word *Deus*, a God, and is descriptive of those who, denying the *existence and necessity* of any revelation, profess to believe that the existence of a God is the chief article of their belief.—The same religionists are now often called *Infidels*, from the Latin, *Infidelis*, on account of their incredulity, or want of belief in the Christian dispensation of religion. The only difference, if indeed there be any, between a Deist and a *Theist*, (which comes from the Greek term θεός, God) is, that the latter has not had revelation proposed to him, and therefore follows the simple light of nature and tradition.

The *Free-thinkers* (improperly so called) of the last century set out with the principles of

Deism, but did not stop there, for they afterwards made rapid approaches towards Atheism and Scepticism; and this, it is to be feared, is too commonly the case with Deists in general, as no system of principles, after having dismissed those of Christianity, will come recommended by sufficient authority to establish belief.

RISE, PROGRESS, AND HISTORY.—If antiquity in matters of religion be a sure sign of Orthodoxy, *Deism* must, without doubt, claim our attention; for, according to Dr. Hodges, “it was very near coeval with Revelation. Upon the declaration of God’s will to Adam, and the terms of his acceptance, the *founder* of Deism appeared to contradict and oppose the divine precepts. Hath God, says he, said, ‘ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said, &c. And the Serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die.’ (Gen. iii. v. 1, 2, 3, and 4,) instructing hereby his children of all ages in that kind of sophistry which hath been used to evade and pervert the plainest doctrines and precepts, which have been written for the government of human actions.”\*

However strange this account of the origin of Deism may appear, yet the Doctor is countenanced in it by Dr. Hicks, who seems to deduce it from the same source, in calling the Deists

“πρωτοκοι τι Σατανυ.”

\* *Prel. Discourse to his Elihu*, p. 8.

In most ages of the Church, Deism has attended the triumphs of Christianity, either as a captive, a rebel, or an enemy. Some Pagans, in the evangelic age, preferred a rational theism to an absurd idolatry, and became proselytes at Jerusalem, without adopting the Jewish ritual. Many of the exiled Jews, on the destruction of their capital, seem to have retained no other peculiarity, than the exclusive tenet of the Divine Unity. Both Pagans and Jews of this cast united in forming a sect, but little known in ecclesiastical history, the *Hypsistarians*, or *Cœlicolæ* of the 3d century. These were a sect of Deists, formed by such of the Jews and Gentiles as, deserting the religion of their ancestors, substituted *naturalism* in its place. Three laws of Honorius, in the Theodosian code, were directly formed against them; in one of which, he ranks them with the heathens, as Cromwell did our *English* Deists.\*

Although deistical principles have thus been of so long standing in the world, yet it was not till about the Reformation that their abettors were known by the name of Deists.

It has been affirmed by some that we, of this nation, are entitled to the distinction of having led the way to the rejection of Revelation. We have this honour given to us (for an honour *they* esteem it,) by foreign writers; and, what is worst of all, we

\* See Aphthorp's *Letters on Christianity*, p. 10. &c.

are applauded for it by such men as D'Alembert and Voltaire. To be stigmatised with *their* praise, and for such a reason, is a disgrace indeed; and (*"pudet hæc opprobia,"* &c.,) it would be a still greater, if we could not justly disclaim and throw back from ourselves the humiliating and ignominious applause which they would inflict upon us. But this, I apprehend, we may effectually do, for there appears to be sufficient ground for asserting, that the earliest infidels of modern times were to be found, not in this island, but on the continent. If we may credit the account given of Peter Aretin, (who lived and wrote in the 14th century,) by Moreri, and particularly the epitaph upon him, which he recites, there is reason to believe that he was an infidel of the worst species; and Viret, a divine of great eminence among the first reformers, and a friend of Calvin, who wrote about the year 1563, speaks of a number of persons, both in France and Italy, who seem to have formed themselves into a sect, and had assumed the name of Deists, perhaps with a view to cover their opposition to the Christian Revelation, under a more specious name than that of Atheists.

But it was not till the beginning of the following century, that any men of that description, or any publications hostile to Revelation, appeared in this kingdom. From that time, indeed, down to the present, there has been a regular succession of anti-christian writers, of various descriptions, and various talents, whose uniform object

has been to subvert the foundation of revealed religion.\*

“Irreligion, and even Atheism, appeared in Italy at the revival of letters, partly from an excessive fondness for the ancient philology, and principally from the disgust which elegant and polished minds always feel at the follies of popular superstition, then at their height in the unreformed dominion of Popery.

“In England, the modern Deism is the offspring of that luxury and impiety, which succeeded the great rebellion. The first assaults on revealed religion were rude and tumultuary, like those of peasants and barbarians. Libertinism began the attack, which was supported by the aid of learning. Much erudition was employed on both sides, in the conduct of this interesting controversy with an Herbert, a Blount, a Toland, a Woolston, a Collins.

“While the philosopher of Malmesbury (Hobbes) attempted to reason Britons out of their faith and freedom, Shaftsbury employed the finer weapons of wit and ridicule. All in their turns have been disarmed of the power of doing mischief. It was reserved for the times we live in, to assault Christianity with the shining and specious arms of eloquence.

“To the plebeian style of Chubb and Morgan,

\* See Bishop Porteus's *Lectures on St. Matthew*, vol. ii. p. 69, &c.

to the thorny erudition of Woolston and Collins, to the wit and ribaldry of Shaftsbury and Mandeville, have succeeded the purity and elegance of Voltaire, the cold correctness of Hume, and the impassioned delicacy of Rousseau. In this great question, Bolingbroke, like another Messala,\* has displayed the richness and harmony of the English language. Chesterfield leaving the debate about principles to the metaphysic of his noble predecessor, has availed himself of equal eloquence, to subvert our morals. His popular letters are a complete example of human corruption, veiling itself under the decent exterior of false virtue, false science, and accomplishments equally brilliant and deceitful.

“Our antagonists have been as various in their mode of assault, as in their style and erudition. The first, and still the most considerable of the writers against Revelation, made their objections in form to its capital proofs, the evidence of prophecy, miracles, and doctrine; and they gave occasion to a complete defence of each. Since religion has been found impregnable in her citadel, her enemies have been content to make desultory attacks on the mere outworks, and have exchanged the open war, for the more insidious and destructive way of stratagem. Not to wear out a metaphor too obvious in Polemic literature, objections to Revelation have been of late proposed obliquely,

\* “Messala nitidus et candidus, et quodammodo præ se ferens in dicendo nobilitatem suam, viribus minor.” *Quintilian*, Lib. 10.



and where the unsuspecting reader would not think to find them. Writers of civil history, (as Gibbon, &c.) have stept out of their way, to asperse both primitive and reformed Christianity. Irreligion hath appeared in the flowery dress of fable and romance; and, like another *Circe*, hath held forth her enchanted cup to transform men into brutes. At this very time, (1778) we see the archimage of Infidelity, (Voltaire) presenting to a dissipated public, the dotages of a worn-out imagination, in every fantastic form that fiction can assume."\*

We may add, that the same insidious mode of assault has been continued to this day, and that it has been found so far successful, as, for a time, to unchristian France.

TENETS.—It is no easy matter to ascertain the peculiar and distinguishing tenets of modern Deism, as its friends seem more willing to tell us what they disbelieve, than what articles they retain in their creed. With an axe in their hand, and a veil over their eyes, they throw down, overturn, and destroy every thing, without building up any thing. They are extravagant in their encomiums on natural religion, though they differ much respecting its nature, extent, obligation, and importance.

Dr. Clarke, in an unanswerable treatise against Deism, divides them into *four* classes, according

\* Apthorp's *Letters*, p. 3, &c.

to the less or greater number of articles comprised in their creed. The *first* are such as pretend to believe in God as *Creator* of the world, but deny his providence. The *second* admit a providence in *natural* things, but deny it in the *moral* world. The *third* class seem to have right apprehensions respecting the being and providence of God, but deny a future state, believing that men perish entirely at death. Yet, surely, such an idea cannot consist with right notions of the *moral* perfections of God.

The *fourth* class of Deists, are such as “believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, together with his providence, and all the obligations of natural religion; but so far only, as these things are discoverable by the light of nature alone, without believing any Divine revelation.”

These last, the author observes, are the only true Deists; but as the principles of these men would naturally lead them to embrace the Christian Revelation, he concludes, there is now no consistent scheme of Deism in the world.

Dr. Clarke then adds these pertinent remarks, mingled with a becoming severity:—“The Heathen Philosophers, those few of them who taught and lived up to the obligations of natural religion, had indeed a consistent scheme of Deism as far as it went. But the case is not so now; the same scheme is not any longer consistent with its own principles; it does not now lead men to believe and embrace Revelation, as it then taught them to hope for it. Deists in our days, who re-

ject Revelation when offered to them, are not such men as Socrates and Cicero were; but, under pretence of Deism, it is plain they are generally ridiculers of all that is truly excellent in natural religion itself. Their trivial and vain cavils, their mocking and ridiculing without and before examination, their directing the whole stress of objections against particular customs, or particular and perhaps uncertain opinions or explication of opinions, without at all considering the main body of religion; their loose, vain, and frothy discourses; and, above all, their vicious and immoral lives, shew plainly and undeniably, that they are not real *Deists*, but mere Atheists, and consequently not capable to judge of the truth of Christianity.”—P. 27.

Indeed, as Mr. Evans remarks, the objections which Deists have frequently made to Revelation, affect not so much the religion of Jesus Christ, as delivered in the gospel, as the abuses of Christianity. Hence reiterated accusations of unfairness, in their objections or cavils, have been brought against the generality of deistical writers; and with this palpable injustice, Lord Bolingbroke, Voltaire, and Thomas Paine, stand particularly charged. The taking the superstition, the avarice, the ambition, the intolerance of Antichristianism for Christianity, has been the great error upon which infidelity has built its system, both at home and abroad. But, without doubt, the only just and honourable way, either of attacking or defending our religion, is to consider it simply as it

is contained in the sacred writings, without any human appendage whatever.

Every true Deist must admit the *possibility* of a Revelation, and, of course, our dispute with them turns chiefly on the *necessity* and the *evidences* of Revelation, both which they deny. *Dr. Kant* and *Dupuis*, indeed, deny the *possibility* of it; they must therefore, at the same time, deny the existence of a God.

It is perhaps no inconsiderable argument for the *necessity*, if not a fair *evidence* of the actual existence, some time or other, of a Revelation from heaven, that a belief in it has so generally prevailed in the world; for oracles as well as sacrifices have been found among almost all nations of the earth. So that Deists are condemned equally with Atheists, by the general voice.

The present Deists may be considered as of two sorts only, those who believe, and those who disbelieve in a future state. Mr. Wendeborn thinks that in England, in 1791, there were “but very few *immortal* Deists,” *i. e.* of the former sort.—Of our English Deists, and their principles, we know less than of those on the other side of the water, where they seem to have renounced every pretension to *immortality*. Their systems.

—————“ Laugh to scorn th’ avenging rod,  
And hurl defiance to the throne of *God* ;  
Shake pestilence abroad with madd’ning sweep,  
And grant no pause—but *everlasting sleep* !  
Blood-guiltiness their crime ; with hell they cope :  
No flesh, no spirit, now must rest in hope.”

*Pursuits of Literature*

The national assembly of France, in 1793, abolished *by law*, a futurity of existence. They *decreed* also, that in every church-yard trees shall be planted, and the figure of Sleep erected, pointing to the tombs; and this sleep, they *decree* to be *eternal*. And “on the burying ground in *Paris*, and many districts of the Republic, this inscription was put up:—

“HERE SLEEP IS ETERNAL!”

A specimen of the modern theology of the “*Most Christian Country*,” (*Meliora pii docuere parentes*,) may be found in the following passage, circulated by the Convention, and extracted from one of the most popular and authentic papers in the reign of Robespierre.

“Provided the idea of a Supreme Being be nothing more than a *philosophical abstraction*, a guide to the imagination in the pursuit of causes and effects, a resting place for the curiosity of enquiring minds, a notion *merely speculative*, and from which no *practical consequences* are to be applied to human life, there can be no great danger in such an idea.—But, if it is to be made the foundation of *morality*; if it is to be accompanied by the supposition, that there exists a God, who presides over the affairs of the world, and rewards or punishes men for their actions on earth, according to some principle of retributive justice, *there can be no opinion more prejudicial to Society.*”

To deprive mankind of their temporal liberties

and happiness, is no doubt a crime ;—to *weaken* in their minds the sense of religion and duty, so as to set them loose like so many wild beasts, to plunder, massacre, and devour one another, is a still *greater* crime ;—but to *extinguish* in their hearts *all* sense of religion, and while we thereby expose them to all the unheard of miseries to which humanity is subject, to filch from them their best and dearest hopes, both here and hereafter ;—This is an injury to humankind, a cruelty, a *crime* of so *complicated* a nature, that, on the great day of *retributive justice*, (a day which *will* come, whether we believe it or no,) it shall undoubtedly *not* fail of its just reward.

These men, and *such* men, whether they may be called Deists, Sceptics, or Atheists, perhaps have little need and little relish for the consolations of Religion. “ But let them know,” says Dr. Beattie, “ that, in the solitary scenes of life, there is many an honest and tender heart pining with incurable anguish, pierced with the sharpest sting of disappointment, bereft of friends, chilled with poverty, racked with disease, scourged by the oppressor, whom nothing but trust *in Providence*, and the hope of a future retribution, could preserve from the agonies of despair.

“ And do they, with sacrilegious hands, attempt to violate this last refuge of the miserable, and to rob them of the only comfort that had survived the ravages of misfortune, malice, and tyranny ! Did it ever happen that the influence of their te-

nets disturbed the tranquillity of virtuous retirement, deepened the gloom of human distress, or aggravated the horrors of the grave! Ye traitors to human kind, ye murderers of the human soul, how can ye answer for it to your own hearts? Surely every spark of your generosity is extinguished for ever, if *this* consideration do not awaken in you the keenest remorse.”

The log in the fable is perhaps as venerable a deity as one without a providence; for if he has no concern for us, it is evident we have none with him: and, as Dr. South has well observed—“If infidelity can persuade men, that they will certainly *die* like beasts, there is no doubt remaining but that they will soon be brought to *live* like beasts also.”—While the infidel glories in the gloomy idea of annihilation (and without doubt, he will be annihilated as to his *name*) and acting on his principles, hastens his *exit*, the serious Christian is supported, at *all* times, by the cheering hope of a glorious immortality after death.—The language of his soul is—

“ O may the grave become to me  
 The bed of peaceful rest,  
 Whence I shall gladly rise at length,  
 And mingle with the blest!  
 Cheer'd by this hope, with patient mind,  
 I'll wait Heav'n's high decree,  
 Till the appointed period come  
 When death shall set me free.”

*Paraphrase on Job xiv.*

The principles of Deism admit of no Sunday or Sabbath, and of no Bible but the universe. "The word of God," says T. Paine, "is the creation we behold."\* Their Deity, whoever he be, cannot be the God of Christians, for the Scripture says, "he that denieth the *Son*, denieth also the *Father*." When their principles are considered, the term *Idolists* may perhaps be allowed to be more descriptive of them than *Deists*, and their religion may with propriety be defined that worship which the *imagination* pays to *human reason*. The object of it must be allowed one attribute which is inseparable from Deity, I mean *invisibility*, for their idol cannot be seen. There is an *internal* as well as *external* idolatry.

With them human reason is paramount in all matters of religion. They own no other authority; and while they refuse every other "lamp unto their feet, and light unto their paths," *her* they will follow wherever she is pleased to lead the way—" *Qua via difficilis, quaque est via nulla sequuntur.*"

Yet, strange to tell, were we to seek for principles proceeding from mental debility and expressive of it, we should no where find them so readily and so frequently as among "Those pompous sons of *reason idolised*." What Cicero observed of the ancient philosophers, holds equally true respecting the (*soi-disantes*) philosophers of the present day, for there is no absurdity so ex-

\* See his Creed in the *Monthly Rev.* for 1794, v. 14. p. 549.



travagant which reason has not taught them to adopt.—“She has persuaded some, that there is no God; others, that there can be no future state. She has taught some, that there is no difference between vice and virtue; and that to cut a man’s throat, or to relieve his necessities, are actions equally meritorious. She has convinced many that there can be no such thing as soul or spirit, contrary to their own perceptions; and others, no such thing as matter or body, in contradiction to their senses.—By analyzing all things, she can shew that there is nothing in any thing; by perpetual sifting, she can reduce all existence to the invisible dust of Scepticism; and, by recurring to first principles, prove to the satisfaction of her followers, that there are no principles at all.”\*

“*Deism*, so called,” says the late reverend and excellent Mr. William Jones, “is a religion without Christianity; it has neither the Father, the Son, nor the Holy Ghost, into whose name Christians are baptised. It has no sacraments, no redemption, no atonement, no church communion, and consequently no charity; for charity is the love and unity of Christians as such. *Natural Religion* is but another name for *Deism*; it is the same thing in all respects.—Therefore, to recommend moral duties on the ground of *Natural Religion*, is to preach *Deism* from a pulpit.”†

\* Mr. S. Jenyns *On the Christian Religion*, p. 120.

† *Essay on the Church*.—Some admirable Strictures on the nature and prevalence of *modern Deism*, may be seen in Bishop Porteus’s *Charge*, for the year 1794.

Atheism, Deism and Christianity, as to the obligations of morality, may be distinguished thus:— To do actions because they are *right* in themselves, is to be governed by the obligations of *moral fitness*, which is *moral virtue*, properly so called, and equally binds the whole species, considered as men, or *moral agents*.—Atheists may be governed by *moral fitness*; and probably *will*, when there is no temptation to hinder them: but *religion* whether *natural* or *revealed*, obliges men to do actions, not because they are *fit* and *proper*, but because they are *commanded*.—Deism consists in being governed by the obligations of *natural religion*. Natural religion consists in obedience to the will of God, as made known by the light of nature and reason; and Christianity consists in obedience to the same will, as made known by the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

“ There is nothing in Deism but what is in Christianity; but there is much in Christianity, which is not in Deism. The Christian has no doubt concerning a future state; every Deist, from Plato to Thomas Paine, is on this subject overwhelmed with doubts insuperable by human reason. The Christian has no misgivings as to the pardon of penitent sinners, through the intercession of a mediator; the Deist is harassed with apprehension lest the moral justice of God should demand, with inexorable rigour, punishment for transgression. The Christian has no doubt concerning the lawfulness and the efficacy of prayer; the Deist is disturbed on this point by abstract considerations concerning the goodness of God, which wants not to be en-

treated; concerning his foresight, which has no need of our information; concerning his immutability, which cannot be changed through our supplication. The Christian admits the providence of God, and the liberty of human actions; the Deist is involved in great difficulties, when he undertakes the proof of either. The Christian has assurance that the Spirit of God will help his infirmities; the Deist does not deny the possibility that God may have access to the human mind, but he has no ground to believe the fact of his either enlightening the understanding, influencing the will, or purifying the heart.”\*

SECT.—A kind of Deists arose in France during the late revolution, and assumed to themselves the name of *Theophilanthropists*.

This word is a compound term, derived from the Greek, and intimates that they profess to be “*lovers of God and humankind*.” Their common principle is a belief in the existence, perfections, and providence of God, and in the doctrine of a future life; and their rule of morals seems to be love to God and good-will to men.—“The temple, the most worthy of the Divinity, in the eyes of the Theophilanthropists, is the Universe. Abandoned, sometimes under the vault of heaven, to the contemplation of the beauties of nature, they render its Author the homage of adoration and of gratitude. They nevertheless have temples erect-

\* Bishop Watson's *Eighth Letter to Thomas Paine*.

ed by the hands of men, in which it is more commodious for them to assemble to listen to lessons concerning his wisdom. Certain moral inscriptions, a simple altar on which they deposit, as a sign of gratitude for the benefits of the Creator, such flowers or fruits as the season affords, a tribune for the lectures and discourses, form the whole of the ornaments of their temples.”

It would appear that in Paris, and perhaps in other places, they sometimes used to meet in the churches; for we learn, that in October, 1801, they were prohibited from doing so for the future.

See Mr. Evans's *Sketch, or the Manual of the Sect*, published by Mr. John Walker, author of the *Universal Gazetteer*. Mr. W. observes, that they multiply rapidly, and are exceedingly crowded. They conceive their religion, *i. e.* *natural religion*, and their worship, to be the same with those of the first human beings of which history has preserved the remembrance. “The sages of all nations, say they, have not ceased to profess them, and they have transmitted them down to us without interruption.”——“Our principles are the eternal truth; they will subsist whatever individuals may support or attack them, and the efforts of the wicked will not even prevail against them.” *Manual*, in fin.

Mr. Belsham, in his answer to Mr. Wilberforce, speaking of this new French sect of Deists, says——“Its professed principles comprehend the es-

*sence* of the Christian religion; but not admitting the resurrection of Christ, the Theophilanthropists deprive themselves of the only solid ground on which to build the hope of a future existence."

It perhaps did not occur to Mr. B. in making this observation, that it gives us occasion to remark the near alliance between Socinianism and Deism; and should he ever come to view Christianity in what we conceive to be the *true* light, he will then be very far from thinking that its essence is comprehended in *Theophilanthropism*. We may admit the practical tendency of this sect, yet we cannot but lament the defects by which it stands characterised. It wants the *broad basis* of Revelation which would give truth and stability to its doctrines, authority and energy to its precepts, the precious promises of pardon and grace, and the glorious discoveries of immortality!

WORSHIP.—Excepting among this sect of Deists, we hear but little of their religious worship; but of their endeavouring to abolish all worship, except perhaps that of reason, we have heard much of late. Thus "under the third assembly in the time of Herbert and Robespierre, France recognises no other worship but that of *reason*."

"It is at once the religion of the Sophister, whose *reason* tells him that there is a God, as well as of him whose *reason* tells him that there is no God: It is the religion of the Sophister adoring himself, his own reason, or his supposed wisdom;

as it is that of the vain mortal in delirium; nevertheless this is the only religion tolerated by the Jacobin equal and free.”\*

“The Rev. Mr. David Williams” opened, in 1776, a chapel in Margaret Street, Cavendish Square, London, in which the devotion was to be conducted on the general principles of piety and morality,† without respect to any supernatural Revelation, or any doctrines peculiar to Christianity; but after four years it was shut up, as it is supposed, for want of proper support.

From this and other schemes of the same kind more lately attempted in France, it would appear, that where there is no belief of revealed religion, there will be no zeal for any, sufficient to keep up any form of worship.

See “*An Account of the Island of Veritas, with the Form of their Liturgy, and a full Relation of the Religious Opinions of the Veritarians, in four Deistical Sermons.*”—Prayer and Confession belong only to *us sinners*; it might therefore be expected that Deists were noted for *Praise*, but does experience shew that this is the case?

For some of their notions on the subject of Prayer, see Dr. Leland’s *Advantages and Necessity of the Christian Revelation*, part i. chap. 18.

\* Abbé Barruel, vol. iv. page 413.

† His Lectures were afterwards published in 4to, and entitled “*Lectures on the Universal Principles and Duties of Religion and Morality.*”

COUNTRIES WHERE FOUND.—Deism was never the established religion of any country in the world; but there are few civilised nations, where its open or secret abettors may not be found, more or less, at this day. In every quarter of the globe, it may rank amongst its adherents not a few of the men of pleasure,—of the men of the world,—and of those who are not so much *learned* men, as mere *pretenders* to learning.—Many Europeans, and of European extraction in the East Indies, are said to have embraced infidelity; and the same may be said, in some measure, of those also in the West Indies. In regard to the United States of America, Dr. Priestley tells us, that “there are, I believe, in these States fewer professed unbelievers than in any other Christian country.”\*

In Mohammedan countries, and especially in Turkey and at Constantinople, there are a great many persons of note and figure, who call themselves the *Muzerim*, i. e. “*we have got the secret*,” and their secret is, that they reject the whole frame of the Mohammedan religion; and indeed, by their way of reasoning, they seem to deny the certainty, usefulness, and necessity of all Revelation whatsoever, and may therefore be ranked in the number of Deists.

The *Wahabees*, also, a sect which sprung up in

\* *History of the Christian Church*, vol. iv.—A happy change this for the better, from what was the state of the American Colonies in 1701. See Archbishop Drummond’s *Sermons*, p. 124.

the midst of Arabia about the middle of the last century, and which has already increased to 80, or 90,000, decidedly avow the same tenets, insisting "that there never existed an inspired work, nor an inspired writer." Having taken up arms in support of their religion, they are daily carrying consternation and devastation wherever they go; so that the mighty fabric of Mohammedism which once bade defiance to all Europe, may eventually fall at the feet of these Arab reformers. They have already produced a revolution in the government of Arabia;—they occupy the greatest part of the country from the Euphrates to Medina, and have lately taken possession, with infinite bloodshed and devastation, of this holy city itself.—“They set fire to it in various places; destroyed the mosques, after having ransacked them of their valuable shrines and treasures; and completely demolished the tomb of the Prophet.”\*

But it is in Europe where Deism has taken root downwards, borne fruit upwards in its greatest perfection, and flourished in its utmost luxuriance. On the continent of Europe its fruits have lately been exhibited in such scenes of horror, ruin, devastation, and bloodshed as are not to be paralleled, in the annals of the world.

The age in which we live has been called the age of philosophy,—the age of *reason*: and if by

\* See Mr. Faber's *General and Connected View of the Prophecies*, vol. ii. p. 26, &c., note.



reason and philosophy, irreligion be understood, it undoubtedly merits the appellation; for there never was an age since the days of our Saviour; never one since the commencement of the history of the world, in which atheism and infidelity have been more widely disseminated, or more generally professed.—An attempt to extirpate, if it were possible, the Christian religion, hath been carried on of late, *systematically* and in concert by a set of men, “*qui Deum ignorant, et qui vocantur philosophi,*” (Irenæus) and their numerous disciples, emissaries, and adherents.

This impious enterprise, if it did not originate, has principally disclosed itself in France, and has been conducted chiefly by French writers in their own refined language, now become the most fashionable language of Europe. The dexterity of management in this insult on Christianity, consists in assaulting the popular superstitions of popish countries; and in the plausibility of certain objections, to which every science is necessarily subject; while the positive proofs of our religion remain unshaken. To carry on this design, all the sciences have been pressed into the service of infidelity, in an enormous *Encyclopedia*, the work of the whole conclave.

The most popular writers of France, Italy, and Germany, and some perhaps of Great Britain, took their instructions from the general of their order. The plan was formed with a subtlety and diligence, which emulates that of the Jesuits, in their efforts

to support the tottering throne of superstition; and the execution was adapted to all the tempers and capacities of the human mind. To the learned and inquisitive, the philosophic and metaphysical, Deism hath been proposed as a chain of reasoning, ending in materialism.—To the morose and melancholy, a system of fatalism hath been held up, which too often terminates in despair and suicide. While the far greater number of disciples to the new philosophy, have been confirmed in polished luxury and unbounded libertinism. In a *speculative* view, the late and present advocates of irreligion have not perhaps made any real improvement on the old systems of infidelity; which are still the magazines that furnish this beggarly troop, who skirmish in borrowed arms. *Practically*, they have been more successful; if their success is to be estimated by the calamities of the age and the corruption of manners: a success, of that extensive influence, that we have lived to behold irreligion and anarchy carrying all before them, and trampling under foot every thing till now held sacred among men. But, happily for us, irreligion hath now done its worst: the argument is exhausted, and human depravity can hardly be sagacious enough to invent new sophisms, impotently warring against the gospel of truth. Impiety of late hath assumed a form that at once nauseates and terrifies, by that motley dress of ridicule, blasphemy, and barbarity, in which her friends have exposed her to the abhorrence of all serious minds.—The many evils which flow from the polluted source of irreligion—in *public life*, depopulation,

war, famine, and the unnatural connexion of private opulence with public want;—in *domestic circles*, luxury, injustice, cruelty, adultery, duels, suicide, and the like; have been felt to such a degree as to have brought many deluded people back again to a more sound mind, both in politics and religion. In a word, the conviction of the falsehood of the new philosophy begins to gain ground from the surest monitor, experience of its mischievous effects. Christianity has long withstood the attacks of argument, it hath now been exposed also to the utmost that sophistry and human force could effect against it, and it has once more prevailed: we have then this circumstance also to add to the *direct* evidences of its truth.

According to Mr. Levi, many Jews of the present day are Deists at heart, while they make outward profession of the religion of their fathers.

In the Prussian dominions, there is, or was lately, a sect called *Christian Deists*, to distinguish them from those who reject Jesus Christ as an enthusiast, or an impostor. It was against these Christian Deists, that Frederick William, King of Prussia, gave out his edict in 1788.\*

Great Britain has ever been famous for the variety of its religious sects; among others, it hath

\* See Dr. Erskine's *Sketches of Church History*, vol. i. p. 122.

long been a nursery of Deism; and it was the opinion of Voltaire, and others, his friends on the continent, that its abettors in this country were, of late, more numerous than we were aware; but had this their opinion been well founded, their wishes would no doubt have been gratified, in seeing it, before now, more fully confirmed.

Thank God, the enemies of religion and government are, with us, both few in number, and of no repute; and let those who boast of their numbers or abilities, be reminded, in the language of the inimitable Burke:—"Because half a dozen grasshoppers, under a fern, make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew the cud and are silent, pray do not imagine, that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field; that of course they are many in number; or that, after all, they are other than the little *shrivelled, meagre, hopping*, though loud and troublesome, insects of the hour."\*

§ SYSTEMS WHERE FOUND, AND WRITERS PRO ET CON.—There is now no consistent scheme of Deism, see Dr. Clarke, as above, p. 460. Survey the whole globe; the phantom of natural Deism is no where to be found, but is the mere shadow of revelation in Christian countries, and would, with equal ingratitude and impiety, assume the honours of the substance, whose truth it mimics.

\* *On the French Revolution*, p. 127.

The infidels, educated among Christians, owe what learning and religion they have to Christianity, and act the part of those brutes which, when they have sucked the dam, turn about and strike her—*ἄπολακτιζέσθιν*, as Plato says of his disciple Aristotle. It is acknowledged even by Rousseau, one of themselves, that what our infidels call natural religion, is, in a great measure, derived from those very Scriptures, which they absurdly and wickedly reject.

It is not meant that their ideas on this subject are acquired by an actual perusal of the Scriptures; in this study it is to be feared that few or none of them ever made great proficiency; but they are derived from impressions made on their minds in infancy and youth, and from the writings and the conversation of Christians. Whatever might be the operations of true Deism on the minds of Pagan philosophers, that can now avail us nothing; for that light, which once lightened the Gentiles, is now absorbed in the brighter illumination of the gospel; infidels can now form no rational system of Deism, but what must be borrowed from that source, and, as far as it reaches towards perfection, must be exactly the same; and therefore, if they will reject Christianity, they can have no religion at all. Accordingly we see, that those who fly from this, scarce ever stop at Deism, but hasten on with great alacrity to a total rejection of all religious and moral principles whatever.

Our natural stock of knowledge has been so

enriched by the accumulated influx of supernatural instruction, that it is no easy matter to refer our treasures, each to its proper source.

“The lights of reason and revelation fall upon our path, in rays so blended, that we walk like the summer-evening traveller, who, enjoying, at the same time, the full orb of the moon, and the sun’s solstitial twilight, is unable to ascertain the proportion in which he is indebted to each of these heavenly luminaries; and some of us, alas! are such incompetent philosophers, as, because the greater is below the horizon, to attribute all to the less.”\*

The more distinguished advocates for Deism, are, on the continent, Bayle, Voltaire, and his friend Frederick II. King of Prussia; their contemporaries, Boindin, Helvetius, Diderot, Maupertius, D’Argens, Raynal, Rousseau, Condorcet, D’Alembert, Mirabeau, Boulanvilliers, Duke de Choiseul, with a long list of disciples of the new philosophy. The late constituent assembly at Paris were almost all of an atheistical or deistical cast.—In Great Britain, Lord Herbert, Natalis Comes, Hobbes, Toland, Mandeville, Woolston, Collins, Lords Shaftsbury, and Bolingbroke, Chubb, Tindal, Toulmin, Morgan, Blount, Middleton, Halley, Hume, Gibbon, Paine, &c.

The last of these was a man, who, from the lowest origin, raised himself to some distinction

\* Dr. Napleton’s *Advice to a Student in the University*, p. 102.—See also Dr. Balguy’s *Tracts*, p. 295.

in the political and literary world, by his bold and impious libels against government, against religion, and the holy Scriptures themselves. In these writings were concentrated all the malignity, all the shrewdness, all the sophistry of his numerous predecessors; and, from their brevity, their plainness, their familiarity, their vulgar ribaldry, their bold assertions, and artful misrepresentations, they were better calculated to impose on the ignorant and uninformed, and more dangerous to the principles of the great mass of mankind, than any publications that this country ever before produced. And certain it is, that having been distributed with infinite industry through every district of the kingdom, they did, for a time, diffuse their poison far and wide, and made a strong and fatal impression on the multitude. But, thanks be to God! they at length providentially met with talents infinitely superior to those of their illiterate author, which, with the blessing of heaven upon them, gave a sudden and effectual check to the progress of this mischief, and afforded a striking proof of the truth of that prophecy respecting the stability of our religion, "that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it."

Voltaire's writings have unquestionably produced more infidels among the higher classes, and spread more general corruption over the world, than all the voluminous productions of all the other philosophers of Europe put together.

On the other hand, see a piece in the 2nd volume of the *Scholar Armed*, entitled, "*Voltaire*

*Dissected*," where it is said, that his reason "was to *right* reason what a monkey is to a man."—that his learning "was nothing extraordinary: he had the way of making a great figure with a little. He affected universality; but it does not appear that he was deep in any one science,"—that his religion, "by which I mean his speculations about the Deity, (for he had no other) was, as nearly as we can discover, the same with that of the Atheist Vanini,"—that he was "as unsound in his metaphysics as in his divinity,"—that he was "as fond of levelling in learning as in politics," and that his object was "to be rid of truth under the name of error; and to this all his artifices were directed."

"With a strong disposition to evil, he was no friend to restraint of any kind: so he abhorred all but the law of *liberty*, which is *no* law; and all government but the government of *equality*, which is *no* government: and as religion is the support both of law and government, he hated that worst of all."—"If the people of God have an enemy, Voltaire always finds in that enemy something congenial with himself. He therefore takes part with the Egyptians against the Jews, with the Heathens against the Christians, with the Sectaries against the Church, with the Heretics against the Scripture, and with Atheists against God; having expressly defended the Atheist *Vanini*."—P. 334, 5, &c.

It is evident that Voltaire was not a Deist only, but, at the same time, a Materialist, a Fatalist, an Atheist, and a Sceptic.



“There are none but quacks who are certain,” (says he, writing to the King of Prussia, 28th Nov. 1770,) “we know nothing of the first principles.” And again, speaking of the soul,—“doubt is not an agreeable state, but certainty is a *ridiculous* one.”

Yet this is the Coryphæus of the sect, the man who has given laws and religion to multitudes in Europe, for more than half a century past. The modern *soi-disantes* philosophers, *alias* infidels, on the continent, are almost all his disciples; judge then of their improvements in philosophy, politics, and religion; and of the men who have lighted a torch that is to *illuminate* mankind—“*ex uno disce omnes;*”

“They are the men of all mankind most wise,  
And when they die, no doubt all wisdom dies.”

See “*Les Erreurs de Voltaire,*” by the Abbé Nonotte, and “*Voltaire in the Shades,*” or Dialogues on the Deistical Controversy.

But notwithstanding their numbers, and the various arts they have used, infidelity has not been able to achieve any thing which may recompense the activity, or gratify the vanity of these its champions and abettors. They have successfully employed the arts of conversion with the churlish misanthrope, who would assimilate the character of the Deity to the dark and unamiable complex-

ion of his own; with the raw and conceited stripling, who disdains to tread in the beaten track of opinion; and with the obdurate libertine, who is interested in weakening the sanctions, and disproving the very existence of a law by which he stands condemned. But have the virtuous and the wise,—have men of the highest rank in literature, or of the most respectable reputations in society, gone over to their party? By no means. And, if great and good men yet rank themselves under the banners of Christianity, when they may upon conviction desert it without danger and without infamy, a strong presumption arises, that the truth is on our side, and that the cause of true religion has been ably and successfully pleaded by her children.

But while we justify the ways of God, we mean not to speak with undistinguished contempt, or with unrelenting asperity, of every man by whom they have been arraigned. In some of those who have looked upon the gospel with an unfriendly eye, we readily acknowledge, and, under any other circumstances, we should warmly admire, very shining abilities.

We mean only to say of infidels in general, what Dr. Jortin says, when speaking of those whom this country has produced, that “*some* of them have been ignorant and illiterate, *most* of them a sort of half-scholars, and retailers of second-hand wares, *none* of them eminently learned

or contributors to the advancement of erudition and knowledge in any material article.”\*

A few of them indeed, as Lord Herbert, (the father of our English Deists,) Hume, and Collins, are allowed to have been moral characters; but though the goodness of men’s nature sometimes prevails, through God’s mercy and restraining grace, over the ill tendency of their principles, and makes them better than they profess themselves; most commonly they run into such conduct, as must be unwarrantable, according to the very principles and doctrines they have embraced.

But, notwithstanding the cloud of doubts and difficulties which these men have been so long eagerly collecting around them; in these latter times, as in the primitive days of Christianity, those who have sincerely sought after truth, must have found it in the victorious arguments of the friends of the gospel, opposed to the sophisms of the conspirators. And it may be said, that many points of religion have been placed in a clearer light than they had been before, by the modern apologists.†

Hence, could we possibly countenance the principle of doing evil that good may come, we should be apt to say, with the poet,—

\* *First charge to the Archdeaconry of London, in the 7th volume of his Sermons, p. 373.*

† See above, vol. i. p. 212.

*“ Jam nihil, O—querimur ; scelera ipsa, nefasque,  
Hac mercede placent.”*

If the Celsi and Porphirii have been thus numerous, equally so have been the Justins and Origenes; who, “having put on the whole armour of God, and done all to stand,” have stood up in defence of Christianity, and ably warded off every blow aimed at its truth, or its importance to mankind.—Among them may be ranked the venerable names of Grotius,—Leslie,—Ellis,—Addison,—Bentley,—Tillotson,—Stillingfleet,—Butler,—Waterland,—Leland,—Clarke,—Sherlock,—Campbell,—Beattie,—Bryant,—Newton,—Horne,—Watson, and Paley.

Lords Rochester and Lyttleton, Sir John Pringle, Charles Gildon, Gilbert West, and Soame Jenyns, Esqrs., were all converts from Deism, and four of *them* also wrote in behalf of Christianity.

A sufficient antidote against the principles of Deism, may be found in Grotius *On the Truth of the Christian Religion*,—Mr. Leslie’s *short Method with the Deists*, and his *Truth of Christianity demonstrated*.—Dr. Ellis’s *Knowledge of Divine Things from Revelation, not from Reason or Nature*,—Dr. Bentley’s *Phileleutheros Lipsiensis, or Discourse on Free-Thinking*.—Bishop Stillingfleet’s *Origines Sacræ*,—Bishop Butler’s *Analogy*,—Bishop Warburton’s *View of Bolingbroke’s Philosophy*,—Mr. Leland’s *View of Deistical Writers*,—Dr. Beattie’s *Essay on Truth*, and his *Evidences of the Christian Religion*.—the Sermons preached at

*Boyle's Lecture*, in 3 volumes folio, or in 4 volumes 8vo, abridged by Mr. Burnet,—and Bishop Sherlock's *Sermons*.

I will only further add on the subject of this article, that the *Teylerian Society* in Holland lately gave it in the negative, viz. “That man cannot come to the knowledge of God and of the divine attributes without Revelation.”—See the *British Critic*, for January 1799, p. 94.

## ATHEISM AND ATHEISTS.

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“Dies alibi, illic nox omnibus noctibus nigrior densiorque.”\*

NAMES, &c.—The word Atheist is of Greek original, and is compounded of the two terms  $\alpha$ , negative, and  $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ , God, signifying *without God*.—In the strict and proper sense of the word it is characteristic of those who do not believe in the existence of a God, or who own *no* being superior to nature. The same religionists, or rather *anti-religionists*, have been known also by the name of *Infidels*; yet the word *Infidel* is not confined to Atheists only, but is now commonly used to distinguish a more numerous sect, and is become almost synonymous with *Deist*. Atheism has ever

\* Thus Pliny describes the eruption of Vesuvius, which suffocated his uncle; and the description, as far as it goes, seems also to suit the *frigid zone* of the Religious World, to which I have at length conducted the reader.

been so unacceptable to mankind in general, that its abettors have frequently assumed a name more mild than that of Atheists. Thus, about the beginning of the last century, they, as well as the Deists, styled themselves *Freethinkers*, and of late, they have adopted the name of *Illuminati*, or of *Philosophers*.

He who verily disbelieves the existence of a God, as an infinite, intelligent, and moral agent, is a *direct* or *speculative* Atheist: he who endeavours to instil Atheistical principles into others, though they may not be his own principles; or rather, he who confesses a Deity and providence in words, but denies them in his life and actions, is a *practical* Atheist.

Although, in some things, both these are closely united, yet in many things they differ, and, in some respects, they are quite the reverse. Thus, the *speculative* Atheist confesses a Deity for the most part, at least, in his life and actions, but denies him in his words; on the contrary, the *practical* Atheist confesses a Deity in his words, but denies him in his life and actions. The *former* is much *better* than his principles, the latter much *worse*; for the one does much good, which his principles do not enjoin, while the other does a great deal of evil, which his principles do not allow. The former is a *practical* Atheist in principle, the latter a *speculative* Atheist in practice. The error of the former seems to have its seat in the *head*, that of the latter in the *heart*; for the one generally becomes Atheist from affecting an appeal

to his understanding, the other as frequently from following the dictates of his will.

Lastly, the former, if in truth, there ever have been any in the world, has been peculiar to some ages, yet to none more than to the present; the latter hath been too common in most ages of the world.

As far as conduct is concerned, they differ only in this, that the conduct of the practical Atheist is attended with greater moral depravity, as it implies that a man acts contrary to the conviction of his own understanding.—“There is but one thing in the world worse than a *speculative* Atheist,” says *Picus, Earl of Mirandula*, “and that is a *practical* Atheist.”

RISE, PROGRESS, AND HISTORY.—When and where Atheism first took its rise, I do not pretend to say. That it existed, in some sense, before the flood, may be suspected, both from what we read in scripture, and from heathen tradition; nor is it very unreasonable to suppose that the deluge was partly intended to evince to the world a heavenly power as Lord of the Universe, and superior to the visible system of nature. This was at least, a happy consequence of that fatal catastrophe; for, as *Dean Sherlock* observes, “The universal deluge and the confusion of languages had so abundantly convinced mankind of a Divine Power and Providence, that there was no such creature as an Atheist, till their ridiculous idolatries had tempted some men of wit and thought,



rather to own no God, than such as the heathens worshipped.”\*

It is a good argument *ad hominem*, against the Atheists, that *Lucretius* himself, the poet of Atheism, pretends to tell us when Atheism began, and who he was, who first dared to despise and deny the being of a God. This, he says, was his hero and master, *Epicurus*. Yet this is not true in fact.—What Plato tells a *Young Philosopher* of his day has much more the appearance of truth.—“Not thou alone,” says he, “nor thy friends, have been the first who have entertained this” (atheistical) “sentiment of God; but from time *immemorial* there have been more or fewer who have laboured under this disease.”†

Atheistical principles were long nourished and cherished in Greece, and especially among the atomical, peripatetic, and sceptical philosophers; and hence it is that some have ascribed the origin of Atheism to the philosophy of Greece; and if they mean that species of refined Atheism, which contrives any impious scheme of principles, by which it attempts to account for the origin and government of the world, without a Divine Being, they are certainly in the right. For, notwithstanding there might have been in former ages, and in other countries, some persons irreligious in princi-

\* *On Providence*, p. 204.—For the origin of Atheists, and likewise for their tenets, consult Bentley on *Free-Thinking*.

† *De Legibus*, 10.

ple as well as in practice, yet we know of none who, forming a philosophical scheme of impiety, and pretending to defend their hypotheses by principles of reason, grew up to a sect and erected *colleges* of atheistical learning, till the arrogant and enterprising geniuses of Greece undertook that detestable province. Carrying their presumptuous and ungoverned speculations into the very essence of the Divinity, and straining their eager sight to penetrate the pavilion of darkness which encircles the eternal throne, at first they doubted, and at length denied, the existence of a First Cause independent of nature, and of a Providence that superintends its laws, and governs the concerns of mankind.

These principles, together with the other improvements of Greece, were translated to Rome; and, excepting in Italy, we hear but little of Atheism for many ages after the Christian æra. At Rome an *infallible* Atheist occasionally started up, for Popes *John* 24th and *Alexander* 6th are both said to have been accused of the crime.\*

Archbishop Tillotson, in his sermon on Prov. xiv. 34, says, “For some ages before the reformation, Atheism was confined to Italy, and had its chief residence at Rome. All the mention that is of it in the history of those times, the Papists themselves give us, in the lives of their own Popes and Cardinals, excepting two or three small phi-

\* There is nothing new under the sun.—“Cæsar, the *high-priest*, was perhaps as much an Atheist as any man of his own or any times.”—*Apthorft*, p. 319.

losophers, that were retainers to their court. So that this atheistical humour amongst Christians was the spawn of the gross superstition and corrupt manners of the Romish Church and Court. And, indeed, nothing is more natural than for extremes in religion to beget one another, like the vibrations of a *pendulum*, which, the more violently you swing it one way, the farther it will return the other. But, in this last age, Atheism has travelled over the Alps and infected France, and now of late it hath crossed the seas, and invaded our nation, and hath prevailed to amazement."

But to this able writer, in conjunction with many other clergy of the establishment and others, we owe its suppression amongst us; for they pressed it down with a weight of sound argument, from which it has never been able here, and we trust *never will* be able in this nation, to raise itself. Indeed "this country, thank God, is not a soil fitted for so rank a weed; where scarce one solitary Atheist has appeared, like a comet, once in a century, and, after appalling and terrifying the inhabitants with a tremendous but momentary blaze, has sunk at once into obscurity and oblivion."\*

It is said, that, in the year 1623, there were in Paris *alone*, 50,000 Atheists; but had this been the case, their principles would no doubt have unchristianed France, long before the time they

\* Bishop of London's *Charge* for 1794.

really did so.\* That nation has tried, of late, to govern mankind without any religion at all; to make reason the only object of worship, and philosophy the only guide of life. But the experiment has only proved, what common sense might have taught them, that to establish Atheism in any nation, is a vain attempt; for mankind in general *will* have some religion whether true or false.

But modern Atheism is not confined to *ci-devant* most *Christian* ground; we have reason to apprehend that the abettors of Atheism and irreligion were never more numerous, nor more widely scattered over Europe, than of late years, if not at this present day, when our religion suffers with its author, between two thieves, Atheism and Deism, and it is hard to say which is the greater enemy of the two.

TENETS.—Atheism, in its primary sense, is a whole-length picture of every heresy in the world; if it does not comprehend, at least, it goes beyond them all, for it professes to acknowledge no religion, true or false.

\* Dr. Priestley observes, that when he visited *France*, in 1774, “all her philosophers and men of letters were absolute infidels; and that he was represented by one of them, in a mixed strain of censure and compliment, as the only man of talent he had met, who had any faith in the Scriptures.”—“Nay, *Voltaire* himself, who was then living, was considered by them as a weak-minded man; because, though an unbeliever in Revelation, he believed in a God.”—*Past Sermon*, p. 23.

As a religious sect, the very idea of Atheism, so taken, involves a paradox, if not an absurdity; for religion implies every thing that Atheism denies. It is as impossible to conceive of such a sect, as it is difficult to believe that there have ever been in the world any *speculative* Atheists, from real principle and theory. Most people deny that nature could bring forth such an *unnatural, monstrous production*. They will allow those that are accounted such, to be only "*Atheists in ostent.*"— "*Speculative Atheism,*" says Dr. Bentley, "does only subsist in our speculation; whereas really human nature cannot be guilty of the crime."\*

Like the members of most other sects, Atheists, or pretenders to Atheism, are divided among themselves: so far are they from holding the same sentiments, that their systems of opinion, if their hypotheses may be so called, are multiform and inconsistent, as visionary and irrational.

Some, with Protagoras and the sceptics, are satisfied with doubting and living in suspense as to the grand article of human belief, the existence of a God. Among others, who more confidently deny his existence, or who would be thought to do so, some, with Mr. Hume have, at the same time, denied a *First Cause*; of those who allow a *First Cause*, some have however denied it to be an *intel-*

\* The infrequency of genuine Atheists has been often remarked, though, perhaps, no where more forcibly than by Maximus Tyrius. See his *Διαλέξ.* α.

*ligent Agent*, supposing it to act by necessity, or, more properly speaking, a being that never acts, but is acted upon. Others who, with Epicurus, allowing the *First Cause* to be an *intelligent Agent*, may be said to admit a God, notwithstanding deny his providence, and, of course, his *moral* attributes. Some again, who allow a *general* providence, have rejected an *universal* or *particular* providence; confining it, at their pleasure, to the heavens, to the human race, or to the *genera* of beings; thus excluding, by their respective hypotheses, with *Aristotle*, this earth,—with *Pythagoras*, every irrational being; or, with the *Stoics* and others, all species and individuals. Lastly, others who may be said to be orthodox, respecting their belief of God's providence, have, however, unworthy notions of his attributes, and such as, by remote, and often by immediate, consequence, must destroy his very existence.

Thus, many have promoted the cause of Atheism in the world, without intending it, by their framing to themselves such notions concerning God, as have no foundation, either in his nature or in his word.

With respect to this world and its origin, the two leading false hypotheses that have prevailed, are—that of *Ocellus Lucanus*, adopted and improved by *Aristotle*, that it was *eternal*; and, that of *Epicurus*, that it was formed by a *fortuitous concurrence of atoms*. But, should we wait till they prove either of these hypotheses by evident and

demonstrative reasons, the world may have an *end* before Epicurus and his followers prove their atoms could have given it a *beginning*; and we may find it eternal, *a parte post*, before Aristotle and his followers can prove it was so, *a parte ante*.\*

The principal tenets of the *Free-thinkers*, may be seen thrown together in the 1st volume of the *Connoisseur*, under the contradictory title of "THE UNBELIEVER'S CREED."

"That the soul is material and mortal, Christianity an imposture, the Scripture a forgery, the worship of God superstition, hell a fable, and heaven a dream, our life without providence, and our death without hope, like that of asses and dogs,—are part of the glorious gospel of Atheists."†

WORSHIP, &c.—On this head I can say nothing, till I receive information from the Atheists themselves; or, till I have seen a work published about the beginning of the last century, by Mr.

\* Several moderns have believed in the eternity of the world; among others, Sir W. Temple, according to Bishop Burnet, and Dr. G. H. Toulmin, author of a late work, entitled, "*The Antiquity and Duration of the World*." The same doctrine is held by many disciples of Spinoza, in France, as Mr. Volney, and Mr. Dupuis; and perhaps by their brethren of the *London Corresponding Society*, who tell us, "*Nature is our God, and the Universe our Bible*."—See the *Anti-Jac. Review*, vol. i. p. 231.

† Bentley on *Free-thinking*.

John Toland, entitled, “*A Form of Divine Service to the infinite and eternal Universe!*”\*

ATHEISTICAL WORKS.—Lucretius and Spinoza have defended Atheism. The latter wrote in the 17th century, and believed that the universe is God. As Toland, Woolston, and Hume, used generally to pretend that they were friends to Christianity, while they were secretly aiming to overthrow it; so most of the abettors of Atheism, unwilling openly to avow their principles, have used arts equally disingenuous, to support their feeble cause.

Half our danger does not arise from tracts professedly penned in favour of Atheism and Irreligion, but from writings of other kinds, carrying nothing hostile in their appearance. The unsuspecting reader, who sat down to inform or amuse himself with a piece of natural or civil history, biography, a poem, a tale, or a fable, if he have not his wits about him, finds his reverence for the doctrines of religion, and those who teach them, filched from him; rises, to his great surprise, half an infidel; and is not sure whether he has a *Soul*, a *Saviour*, or a *God*.

The dangerous tendency of several writings, some of which were, perhaps, but little suspected of Atheism, has been shewn by Mr. Witherspoon,

\* See Dr. Young's *Night Thoughts*. Night 4th.

“These pompous sons of reason idolis'd,” &c.



an able writer of the last century, and the principles contained in them briefly summed up, in what he calls "THE ATHENIAN CREED."\*

It is well known, that Bayle's Dictionary contains, under the mask of religion and science, a whole mass of atheistical principles; and since the above were written, the same spawn of irreligion has been industriously scattered all over the world, and especially on the continent of Europe, in the wretched productions of modern *philosophers*, of various shapes and sizes, under the name of essays, letters, novels, histories, &c., from the bulky quarto to the meagre pamphlet.†

WRITINGS AGAINST ATHEISM.—An infallible antidote against atheistical tenets may be found in the sermons preached at Boyle's lecture, collected in 3 volumes folio,—Bishop Wilkins's *Principles and Duties of Natural Religion*,—Dr. Cudworth's

\* This Creed is extracted by Mr. W., in his "*Characteristics*," p. 40 to which the reader is referred, as the sum and substance of "Leibnitz's *Theodice*, and his *Letters*, Shaftsbury's *Characteristics*, Collins's *Enquiry into Human Liberty*, all Mr. H—n's pieces, *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, D—n's *Best Scheme*, and Mr. H—'s *Moral Essays*.

† N. A——e is the author of the *Pleasures of the Imagination*, a work to be put on the same shelf with all above."

† Short and popular atheistical tracts have also been printed of late in this country, in the cheapest manner, and sold below their value, that they might find their way to garrets and shop-boards. Such, Dr. Magee tells us, were "literally scattered along the high ways" in Ireland, particularly in the North.—See his *Sermon at St. Anne's, Dublin*, May 5, 1796.

*Intellectual System*,—Abernethy *On the Divine Attributes*,—Fenelon and Bate *On the Existence of a God*,—More's *Antidote against Atheism*,—Knight's *Being and Attributes of God, demonstrated &c.*

All the ablest laymen, and most profound philosophers of *our* nation, have been the firmest believers in the existence and superintendence of a Deity. Indeed, as Lord Bacon has well remarked, in his *Essays*, “A little philosophy inclineth man’s mind to Atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men’s minds about to religion; for, while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may rest in them and go no farther; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederated and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity.”

The being of a God may be proved, 1st, From the marks of design, and from the order and beauty visible in the world; for, as Cato very justly says, “*And that he is, all nature cries aloud.*” 2dly, Confirmed by universal consent.—See Bishop Stillingfleet’s *Origines Sacræ*. 3dly, Proved scientifically from the relation of cause and effect. 4thly, From internal consciousness. 5thly, From the necessity of a *final* as well as efficient cause. And the arguments from these heads may be confirmed from the history of the creation, and from the prophecies and miracles of Scripture.

The arguments for the being of a God are distributed into two kinds: 1st, Arguments *a priori*, or those taken from the necessity of the Divine exist-

ence : 2nd, Arguments *a posteriori*, or those taken from the *works of nature*.

Most people agree with Lord Chesterfield, in believing that the Divine existence cannot be proved *a priori*, and that it cannot be doubted *a posteriori*. On the former species of proof, however, Dr. S. Clarke's *Essay on the Being and Attributes of God* has been generally considered a master-piece, and of the latter, the following passage from Dr. Balguy is a beautiful illustration :—

“ Of all the false doctrines and foolish opinions which ever infested the mind of man, nothing can possibly equal that of Atheism, which is such a monstrous contradiction to all evidence, to all the powers of understanding, and the dictates of common sense, that it may be well questioned, whether any man can really fall into it, by a deliberate use of his judgment.

“ All nature so clearly points out, and so loudly proclaims, a Creator of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, that whoever hears not its voice, and sees not its proofs, may well be thought wilfully deaf, and obstinately blind.

“ If it be evident, self-evident to every man of thought, that there can be no effect without a cause, what shall we say of that manifold combination of effects, that series of operations, that system of wonders, which fill the universe, which present themselves to all our perceptions, and strike our minds and our senses on every side ! Every faculty,

every object of every faculty, demonstrates a *Deity*.—The meanest insect we can see, the minutest and most contemptible weed we can tread upon, is really sufficient to confound Atheism, and baffle all its pretensions.—How much more that astonishing variety and multiplicity of God's works with which we are continually surrounded! Let any man survey the face of the earth, or lift up his eyes to the firmament; let him consider the nature and instincts of brute animals, and afterwards look into the operations of his own mind: will he presume to say or suppose that all the objects he meets with are nothing more than the result of unaccountable accidents and blind chance? Can he possibly conceive that such wonderful order should spring out of confusion; or that such perfect beauty should be ever formed by the fortuitous operations of unconscious, unactive particles of matter? As well, nay better, and more easily, might he suppose that an earthquake might happen to build towns and cities; or the materials carried down by a flood fit themselves up without hands, into a regular fleet. For what are towns, cities, or fleets, in comparison of the vast and amazing fabric of the universe!

“In short, *Atheism* offers such violence to all our faculties, that it seems scarce credible it should ever really find any footing in the human understanding.”

It must be owned on all hands, that the existence of a God is desirable and highly expedient; every argument to the contrary refutes itself, and evidently demonstrates what it is brought to deny

For, when it is said, as by Mr. Hobbes and his followers, that the notion of a God is not from nature, nor from revelation, but from policy and state craft, then is it owned to be for *the good of society*.—When it is supposed that the world came into existence by chance, and is every moment liable to be destroyed by it, then is it *dangerous to live in such a world*.—When it is alleged that the world is eternal, and that all things are by fatal necessity, then *liberty and choice were infinitely better*.—When it is argued from supposed defects in the frame of nature, and in the government of the world, then is it better that the world had been *made, and were governed by a perfectly wise and gracious being*.

But, indeed, the being of a God is so necessary, and withal, a truth so evident, that an Atheist, almost in any sense of the word, had been a creature unheard of in the world, at least in the civilised world, had we been guided solely by instinct and common sense, had not human reason, or rather the abuse of it, lowered some men to a level with the brute creation, from which we are more distinguished by our sense of religion, than by our reason.

The force of the argument from universal consent, will appear when thus stated, according to the method used by Aristotle in his *Topics*, in arguing from authority.—That which seems true to *some wise men*, ought to appear a little probable; what *most wise men* believe, is yet further probable; that in which most men, both *wise and unwise*, do

agree, is still more highly probable;—but what is received as truth by the *general consent of all mankind*, in all ages of the world, hath certainly the *highest degree* of evidence of this kind that it is possible for it *to have*.

In short, the arguments in proof of a Deity are so numerous, and at the same time so obvious to every thinking mind, that to waste time or paper in disputing with a *downright* Atheist, is making too great approaches towards that irrationality, which may be considered as one of the most striking characteristics of the sect.—Yes,

—————“ To add another hue  
 “ Unto the rainbow, or with taper light,  
 “ To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish,  
 “ Is *wasteful and ridiculous excess.*”

NUMBERS, AND COUNTRIES WHERE FOUND.  
 —On this head little can be said with certainty, unless perhaps by themselves. Atheists in general lurk in secret, their conscience and fears will seldom allow them to shew themselves: to be open and appear is the property of *truth*, the daughter of the light and of the day. It may however be affirmed, that the abettors of Atheism and irreligion were never more numerous than they now are, or, than they have been *of late*. They have compassed sea and land to find one nation or whole people of brethren, and once thought they had really discovered one, and stood with open arms, ready to give that polite

people, the Hottentots, the *fraternal embrace*. But we have reason to believe that, as has always been the case, they are more numerous in Europe, and particularly in France, Germany, and Italy, than any where else; and, if there is any thing criminal in their principles and conduct, those of Europe have of all others, the greatest danger to fear. But, whatever may become of their persons, on *their emigration*, we cannot help believing, with the epigrammatist *Owen*, that their principles are confined to the four corners of this world alone:—

“ Descendat tristem licet Atheus in Orcum,

“ Nullus in inferno est Atheus, antè fuit.”

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS.—The more noted Atheists, since the reformation, are Machiavel, Spinoza, Hobbes, Blount, and Vanini. And to these we may add Hume, and Voltaire, the *Cori- phæus* of the sect, and the great nursing father of that swarm of them, which, in these last days, had well nigh eaten out the vitals of Christianity, and, had they been encouraged, would have left unconsumed not even the skeleton of religion, or of any real virtue among men.

“ The *reason* of Voltaire,” says the great and good Bishop Horne, “ was to right reason what a monkey is to a man.—And his *religion*, by which I mean his speculations about the Deity, (for he had no other) was, as nearly as we can discover,

the same with that of the Atheist Vanini, whose principles he expressly defended.”\*

This Lucilio Vanini was an Italian ; and, notwithstanding it is said that he had proved to his judges, in a strong and moving manner, the existence of a Deity, from a straw which he had picked up at the bar before them, yet the parliament of Toulouse pronounced on him sentence of death, and he was accordingly burnt there for his atheistical tenets, A. D. 1619. He confessed that he was one of twelve who sat out from Naples to spread their doctrines in all parts of Europe. Yet, after all, few will be inclined to defend his punishment, any more than his principles ; for the man’s eccentricities through life, as well as his ravings after he had heard his *cruel* fate, evidently shew that his sentence should have been confinement, rather than death.

Even in this country, *direct Atheism*, if openly avowed, is a capital offence ; for in an act of Parliament in 1661, c. 21, there is a clause to this purpose : “ Like as his Majesty, with advice foresaid, finds, statutes and ordains, that whosoever shall *deny God*, or any of the persons of the blessed Trinity, and *obstinately continue therein*, shall be processed, and being found guilty, that they be punished with death.”—Yet, in open defiance of this act, (for I am not aware that it is repealed) and with an unusual effrontery and assurance,

\* See the second volume of *The Scholar Armed*.



we are told that a *Mr. William Hammon*, of Liverpool, publicly declared himself to be an Atheist.—Thus, “Whereas some have doubted whether there ever was such a thing as a proper Atheist, to put them out of all manner of doubt, I do declare, that, upon my honour, I am one. Be it therefore remembered, that, in London, in the kingdom of England, in the year of *our Lord*, 1781, a man has publicly declared himself an Atheist.”\*

The conduct of this man, too, creates a suspicion that the faculties of his mind were at that time not so perfectly sound as might be wished.

Cato Zwack declared himself a *downright* Atheist; and Dupont exclaimed, in the French Convention, “*I am an Atheist!*” but these are the mere ebullitions of that intellectual process, which was then carrying on, and were said at a time when the observance of religious worship was punished, in France, as an offence against the laws.†

The period of implicit *reception* in that country, appears to be over; the period of implicit *rejection*

\* See Dr. Priestley’s *Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever*.

† Christianity was abolished in France in 1794, and re-established in 1802—See in Dr. Ryan’s *History of the Effects of Religion*, p. 426, &c., the substance of the *Concordate* between the Pope and the French Republic, on the 5th and 7th of April 1802, when *Portalis* and *Simeon*, two of Buonaparte’s counsellors of, state lamented the effects of their Atheism and infidelity, and maintained the necessity of religion, on the ground of its advantages to individuals and communities.

has succeeded; and the period of just discrimination, it is hoped, will yet take place, however little ground we may have to conclude, from present appearances, that it is near at hand.

Meantime, I close this work with the following supplication, which the church of England, whose charity embraces all mankind, puts into the mouth of all her members; and I can readily believe that every reader of these volumes, *who calls himself a Christian*, whether Churchman or Dissenter, or of whatever denomination he be, will sincerely and fervently join me in it, and add his hearty amen.—

“O GOD, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech thee, for all *sorts and conditions of men*, that thou wouldest be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations.

“More especially, we pray for the good estate of the Catholic Church; that it may be so guided and governed by thy good spirit, that *all who profess and call themselves Christians*, may be led into the way of *truth*, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life!” *Amen.*











